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A HISTORY

OF

ENGLISH DRESS

FROM THE SAXON PERIOD TO THE PRESENT DAY.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is not intended, in the following pages, to give a history of clothing, but to describe the changes that have occurred in the fashion of our apparel since the days of the Roman occupation of Britain. To trace the origin of clothes would involve the discussion of many principles of psychological interest. What first prompted man to devising raiment? Was it the love of ornamentation—a quality so universal and so deeply seated as to seem like an instinct? Was it the desire for protection as man became more of a roving animal? Was clothing first adopted as a distinction by those who assumed superiority over their fellows? Was it the result of man contriving for himself rude habitations, instead of sheltering in the caves and holes of the earth? How and where the idea of clothing first grew up must remain matter for conjecture. But, once adopted, the form of clothing was, in the first instance,

determined by climate. In hot countries it was loose and flowing; in cold countries it was close and shaped to the limbs. Next to climate as a determining cause came occupation and habits: active, predatory peoples adopted clothing suited to rapid movement, and which served, to some degree, as a defence from assault; more peaceful nations, given to tilling their own corner of the earth, sought a form of clothing that combined ease with a certain amount of protection from the elements. In a more advanced stage of civilization, when clothing became dress, all sorts of conflicting elements entered into its composition—idiosyncrasies of taste, wealth, rank, and intercourse with other nations.

There is a certain analogy between costume and speech, between the writings of a nation and its garb. The crudity of ideas and language in early times is reflected in grotesque attire. In later eras we see the same characteristics that mark costume appearing in both written and spoken speech. The high-flown language of the last century is reflected in the elaborate form of dress that prevailed then. Speaking was as grandiloquent as writing. The oratory of the House of Commons, of Pitt and of Burke, was as different from the oratory of to-day as the

costume of those statesmen was from the costume of the present leaders in Parliament. No doubt modern scientific discoveries have had much to do in determining the precision observable now in the utterances of the best speakers and writers. Scientific statements do not admit of florid sentences. The wings of imagination have to be clipped, and rhetoric reduced to sober narrative. The simplicity of modern speaking and writing has its counterpart in the plainness of modern costume, in its unadorned utilitarianism.

In following the course of costume in England, two things have to be remembered: firstly, that we are not, and never have been, an æsthetic people, with a quick perception for harmony and fitness in outward things, which has caused us to be imitators rather than originators; secondly—and this applies more particularly to earlier times—owing to our geographical position, Continental fashions have come to us filtered through France. That country, except for some very brief periods, has always been our acknowledged leader in matters of costume. From Italy, from Spain, and occasionally from the countries of Central Europe, France has borrowed modes which, when naturalized among her own people, she has passed on to us. In a general way we speak of our fashions as French,

but frequently we have been imitating in a clumsy style some half-worn-out caprice of another country.

It seems strange that, in centuries long past, when social life was so rude even among the highest in the land, money should have been spent with such recklessness on luxuries of dress. Up to the last century, prodigality in this respect was out of all proportion to the general diffusion of comfort and to the style of living even among the rich. The enormous sums given for precious stones, rich stuffs, and embroideries are no index to the degree of luxury enjoyed in other directions. Of course, only an approximate calculation can be made of the actual outlay, for it is extremely difficult to estimate the value of money in past times as compared with our own. In the fourteenth century, sums have to be multiplied by fifteen, according to some authorities, to reach present value. The constant variations in the coinage make it impossible to gauge the amounts accurately. For instance, the shilling in the reign of Edward III. was equal to eighteenpence in the reign of Henry VI. In the time of the first three Edwards, the silver pound was raised from twenty to twenty-five shillings, while Henry V. coined it into thirty shillings. Up to the last century, the value of money differed greatly from present values :

a shilling represented more purchasing power than the shilling of to-day. But to attempt any close comparison would only be misleading, and would be useless without going into the whole question of labour and wages, the value of land and the fluctuation of prices.

Costume in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales is only treated of in periods when the national dress was commonly worn. Since the seventeenth century there has been no development of dress in those countries apart from the development of dress in England. The old forms have been retained chiefly by the peasantry and dwellers in remote parts, while the majority have adopted whatever fashions have been followed in England.

Military and ecclesiastical dress, which must be regarded as class costume, not affecting the bulk of the nation, has not been described with the same detail as general dress, and has only been traced as long as the changes were obvious and important. No attempt has been made to discuss military regulations as to equipment, or to explain the symbolism of vestments. With regard to ordinary male costume, the records of the past forty years offer so little that is noteworthy to the student of fashion, that it has seemed unnecessary to pursue the subject in the second half of this century. Men's

dress has ceased to lay any claim to picturesqueness, and can now only be discussed from the point of view of mere clothing.

In the chapters dealing with trade and commerce, those branches have been selected which directly affect or have been affected by changes in costume, and discussion of economic questions has been avoided as far as possible. The history of a people's dress involves reference to many subjects of general interest, especially in earlier times, when the evolution of costume is best seen in following the course of social life and the development of the arts of civilization. In the present age, fashion has its own records, its own literature, very voluminous and daily multiplying, and in addition thereto it claims a niche in nearly every newspaper and periodical. The Press is the strongest witness to its power. Ridiculed and denounced by satirists and moralists in all ages, fashion has withstood every assault, and at this latter end of the nineteenth century wins more attention and occupies a larger place among the social sciences than at any previous period.

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SAXON-NORMAN PERIOD.

ENGLISH DRESS.

CHAPTER I.

What the Saxons found when they came to Britain—Roman influence on the Britons—Changes in British dress after Roman occupation—Signification of colours—Irish dress.

"Bad will not be good till worse comes after."
Icelandic Proverb.

When the various tribes whom we class together as Saxons poured into Britain, they found a thickly wooded country pierced by valuable mines of lead, tin, and iron, corn and game in abundance, and a race inured to hardship, brave in battle, and skilled in some of the arts of civilization. The invaders were hardier, more numerous, and more barbarous than the invaded, and repeated incursions produced the natural result — that the original inhabitants ceased to be the chief people in the land, and, though not rooted out, were driven into corners and dwindled away. The new men settled down, adopted the country as their own,

and held it with varying success against subsequent intruders for something like five centuries. The Roman occupation was a very different thing. It was a civilized people coming to an uncivilized. The resources of the country were opened up, the rude agriculture was improved, the forests and marshes were intersected by roads, solid walls and buildings were erected. A powerful shoot of the old world was grafted on to the new. Still, to the Romans, Britain was only a colony, not an abiding-place.

The early Britons, when they had got beyond the stage of paint, adopted a form of clothing which, rude as it was, must have been better fitted to their climate and conditions than that which they afterwards copied from the Romans. The skins of wild animals they made into leggings and close tunics or coats—unshapely, no doubt, but warm and serviceable. The Romans foisted their own dress upon the Britons, who from a trousered became an untrousered people. But the Roman tunic and toga were not forms of dress suited to the inhabitants of a country like Britain, and although the influence of the classic style on costume may be traced in a variety of ways for a very long period, there was a gradual reversion to the more convenient and practical mode of sectional dressing,

and garments were shaped to the limbs. This, however, only applies to male costume. Women's dress from primitive to present times has been irrational, covering without clothing the body. The long gown, winding about the feet and impeding movement, which is seen in the Roman-British Period, has survived to this day, while the changes that have been wrought from time to time have been in the direction of additional weight and inconvenience until quite recently, when the improvements in underclothing have lightened the burden of dress.

The clothing of the early Britons was much the same as that of the Gauls, with whom they were closely associated, some of the Belgic Gauls having settled in Britain. From them the Britons learned how to dress skins, to spin, and to weave. The Gauls made various kinds of cloth, coarse and fine, which they dyed different colours. For the tunic and trousers they used a cloth of mixed colours, forming a check, the prototype of the Scotch plaid; the mantle was generally dyed one colour, the favourite colour of the Britons being blue. The Britons were especially skilful in dyeing, using the juice of plants for the purpose, such as the foxglove and the sorrel, and the famous woad from which the blue dye was made. Gauls

and Britons were both fond of ornament, and encircled their waists, necks, arms, wrists, and fingers with bands of gold and silver, often massive and broad. Men wore their hair long, and the head was commonly without any other covering than that provided by nature; but sometimes a cone-shaped cap was added, called a "penguwch," afterwards adopted by the women, and the men took to a kind of hat. The Gauls covered their heads, when fighting, with a formidable-looking brass cap, having large ornaments and appendages. For some centuries, in England, the custom prevailed, among men, of going bareheaded on ordinary occasions, head-coverings being used only for protective and defensive purposes. Shoes of raw cowhide, coming up to the ankles to meet the trousers, were very early in use. When the Romans came, the mantle, which before had been clasped in front with an enormous brooch, was thrown over the left shoulder, leaving the right shoulder exposed. The loose pantaloons worn by the Britons, and which the Romans called "braccæ," were given up, and the Roman tunic, reaching to the knees, took the place of both the "braccæ" and the ancient pais, or close coat.

There does not seem to have been much difference between the long tunic, coming down to the

feet, worn by women in Britain and Gaul, and the tunic of the Roman women. Over the tunic the British women wore a shorter garment, which they called a "gwn," or gown, and the Roman women a kind of mantle called by various names. There was no striking change in the women's costume with the Roman occupation, as there was in the men's, though no doubt the luxury introduced by the Romans affected both sexes.

Colour was an important element in British dress. The bardic colours were blue, green, and white; the colour for the priesthood was white, up to Roman times, when the priestesses seem to have exchanged their simple white tunic for coloured robes. The Irish Druids wore several colours, the higher the rank the greater the variety. In Ireland, outside the priesthood, colour was much esteemed; and the first thing approaching to a sumptuary law in the British Isles were the ancient regulations, passed long before the Christian era, ordering the Irish peasantry and soldiers to have their garments of one colour only, officers of two colours, commanders of clans of three, and so on, the royal family being allowed seven colours. Irish bards wore plaid or chequered cloth for their under-garment—a kind of tunic,—or else linen dyed saffron colour, and over this they threw a long cloak

striped in various colours. Bards, although generally of good birth, were not of the first order of the nobility, so would, probably, not have been permitted to wear more than five colours, viz. red, blue, green, black, and white. Although the Irish knew how to wash and bleach linen, they were fond of dyeing it saffron. This saffron dye, of which we constantly read, is thought not to have been saffron at all, but a preparation called "archil," procured from the lichen growing on the rocks in Ireland.* The dress of the Irish was akin to that of the natives of the south-west of Spain, whence they are supposed to have come. In early times it was very sumptuous. Silk, embroidery, and jewels were freely used. Silk was imported to Ireland long before it found its way to England. The Irish kings had magnificent gold crowns, and the chiefs indulged in gold-hilted swords mounted with jewels, gold collars, and scarlet silk cloaks clasped with gold brooches. A number of edicts fixing the price of articles of dress existed in pagan times, and were handed down from century to century. The value was expressed in kind, not in money; as, for instance, a silver bodkin was put down as equal to the price of thirty heifers. "Bodkin" seems to have been a generic name for an orna-

* *Archæologia*, vol. vii., Article by Lady Moira.

mental pin or brooch, and although used by the women to fasten up their hair, was not limited to that one purpose. The Irish were proud of their hair, which was generally abundant. It is related that a monk, in the year 1053, tried to enforce the tonsure upon the young men and women whom he had under tuition, but they rose in such fierce rebellion against him that he was driven from his post and forced to go into exile. In the tenth century we find the Irish still rejoicing in their finery; but when, rent by civil wars, the country fell under the English yoke, and the nation had declined in learning and the arts, their dress lost much of its ancient splendour, and they are always described by contemporary writers as having a barbarous appearance.

CHAPTER II.

Costume of the Saxons on their coming to Britain—Their skill in dyeing and weaving—Liking for colour—Uses of linen—Form of the tunic—Leg-bandages—Similarity of costume for all classes—Embroidery and ornaments—The mantle—The military habit the same as the civil—Dress of the women—Use of silk—Import and export trade of the Saxons—Beginnings of the Norman influence.

"The workmanship surpassed the materials."

OVID.

THE Saxons came wearing the Frankish dress—a short, sleeveless tunic and mantle. There is a doubt as to whether they wore the "braccæ" like the early Britons, as they are sometimes represented with bare legs; but at any rate they had boots of rough, strong leather, and no class, apparently, went barefoot. They brought with them a knowledge of dyeing and weaving, in which they became very proficient. With all their piratical, roving tendencies, the Saxons easily learned the arts of peace, and soon improved by contact with the Romanized Britons. They had a great liking for

colour and ornament, and the only part of their dress that was black was the shoe. In this they differed from the Danes, who clothed themselves entirely in black. The tunic opened at the neck like a shirt, and came down to the knee; when slit at the sides it marked the wearer as a bondsman. Chiefs and men of rank had their tunics bordered with gilded leather or embroidered in colours. In those early times a great deal of linen was spun—an industry which was allowed to lapse,—and Saxon monks were ordered to wear linen tunics and linen leg-bandages to distinguish them from the laity, who generally wore wool. Probably the linen worn by monks was very coarse, but there were finer sorts for luxurious laymen; and the Saxon ladies, who spent much time in spinning, were very proud of the whiteness of their linen. Later on, we find the form of the tunic slightly changed. Long sleeves, made in rolls or folds from elbow to wrist, were added. A sort of hose was introduced, and between the knee and the ankle the leg was crossed with bands of leather, linen, or cloth. This cross-gartering, known as the Saxon leg-bandages, was perpetuated for a long period under different forms, and even survives still in the hay-bands of the ostler.

There was little difference between the dress of

an ealdorman and of a villein, as far as shape was concerned, except that the higher the rank the longer the tunic. The king and persons of good birth were distinguished by the richness and variety of their ornaments. The girdle, for instance, which was worn at the waist, would be of plain leather for a poor man, while his master's would be gilded and embroidered. Saxon dames had a good deal of time on their hands, and those of high degree, besides spinning and weaving, wrought a quantity of ornamental work. Embroidery under their skilful fingers grew into quite a fine art, and much of this beautiful work was used upon the garments of their families. Even the leg-bandages were adorned with needlework, and the mantles and tunics were very richly bordered in many colours. It is recorded that the famous Dunstan amused his leisure hours in devising patterns for a lady's embroidery. The Saxons, too, were as fond of jewellery as the Britons and Gauls, and massive bracelets, brooches, chains, and belts of gold and silver and precious stones distinguished the wealthy. Rings were more worn by women than men. When the Saxons first came to Britain they wore the brooch in the form of the pagan cross, but they discarded this after their conversion to Christianity.*

* J. F. Hodgetts, *The English in the Middle Ages.*

Like the Britons, they did not care much about covering their heads, but displayed their long hair freely, parting it in the centre and letting it fall in curls on their shoulders. Sometimes only the moustache was worn, and sometimes the beard was allowed to grow and was trimmed into two points. The clergy were forbidden to wear both long hair and beards. The Saxons wore the same dress for fighting as for everyday use before the fashion of body-armour came in, simply putting on a cap or a helmet and throwing aside the mantle which was worn in a variety of ways, but in no case does it appear suitable for a fighting costume, though there are representations of men prepared for battle with mantles tossing over one arm. State mantles were long and voluminous, and generally fastened in front with a brooch in ancient British fashion. For ordinary occasions they were shorter, and were often fastened on the right shoulder, hanging in nearly even lengths back and front. They were garments which could be arranged according to the taste of the wearer.

The dress of the women in the Saxon Period differed a little from the dress of women in the Roman-British Period. It still consisted of two pieces,—the tunic and the gown, but the gown was

now worn much longer, generally quite concealing the tunic with the exception of the sleeves, which were close and came down to the wrist, finished off with a bracelet or a band, while the sleeves of the gown were wide. Pictures representing women in a sitting posture with the gown slightly drawn up, show that the tunic, or kirtle, reached down to the feet. Only the poorer classes wore short gowns. The mantle, of some contrasting colour, was of no particular shape, apparently, but a wide piece of stuff that could be wrapped about the form in several ways like the man's cloak. Ladies of rank had their gowns and mantles elaborately embroidered, working wonderful devices upon the cloth in silk and gold thread. It was a very simple costume, requiring little making, but not ungraceful. The gowns, like the tunics of the Roman women, were of the same length back and front; and the fulness was about equally distributed, which caused the material to hang in loose folds all round. Our ancestresses did not concern themselves with back and front breadths, and the pleating and gathering were all done by the girdle. Unlike the men, the women covered their heads completely with a "head-rail," made of a large piece of linen, silk, or stuff, which was drawn well over the head like a hood, and wrapped loosely about the neck.

It was too large and heavy-looking to be becoming, but was not nearly so ugly in its primitive form as it afterwards became when it developed into the wimple.

There was a good deal of colour in a Saxon lady's dress, between the tunic, gown, mantle, and head-rail; and although in the present day we often combine three or four colours in one costume, the effect is very different, because the dress is cut up into so many parts. A Saxon lady knew nothing about vests, "revers," panels, and "plastrons." When she wanted to introduce another colour she was obliged to adopt it for a complete garment. The dyes used by the Saxons were very bright, and they employed primary colours chiefly for their clothing. But they acquired great skill in the art of colouring, and imparted very rich hues to their cloth. In gilding leather they were particularly successful; it was a material much used, not only for the borderings of tunics, but for portions of the helmets.

Saxon ladies were fond of hunting, and when they followed the chase they donned a short kirtle and mantle. Some writers think that they rode astride like men; but they are generally pictured sitting sideways in an ugly, inconvenient posture, with the face turned away from the horse's head.

But whichever way they rode they did not deem it necessary to wear gowns of more than ordinary length. Beads were often used as an edging to the gowns, and amber, agate, and glass beads were worn as ornaments.

Silk was imported in the eighth century, if not before, and gradually entered more into the dress of the wealthy ; and as the import and export trade grew, fine linen and different sorts of cloth found their way here, and Saxon embroidery and gold and silver work were seen in the foreign markets. Our chief commerce was with Normandy, Flanders, and the adjacent parts of France. By the middle of the tenth century, London had become a city of commercial importance. Edgar was a monarch who delighted in luxury, and much costly silk and fine stuff must have been imported in his reign, for he not only used these things for his royal person, but gave valuable presents to his favourites. It was customary, too, at this period, for the king to give rich dresses to certain of his nobles at Eastertide. Edgar welcomed all foreigners who were skilled in handicrafts, and took care to protect English merchants in the exercise of their calling from pirates and plunderers.

The Norman influence was now slowly creeping in. Ethelred the Unready, who had married a

Norman wife, took refuge in Normandy when the Danes overran England. His sons Edward and Alfred lived in Normandy until Alfred came over with a body of Normans and made the fatal attempt to assert his rights. Edward, when he succeeded to the throne, surrounded himself with the men in whose company he had spent the days of his exile, and placed Normans in the chief offices. With a Norman court, Norman priests, Norman soldiers, and Norman dignitaries everywhere, the Norman costume became the fashionable dress. In the unsettled state of the succession, and the constant difficulties with the Danes, the men of the new nation had found their opportunity; and the visit of William of Normandy to his cousin Edward the Confessor, after the banishment of Earl Godwin, was the first direct step towards the establishment of the Norman line in England. Harold's visit to the Duke was the second, and then came the final overthrow of the Saxon kings with the death of Harold on the field of Senlac.

CHAPTER III.

Dress of the Norman nobility—Their luxurious tastes—Introduction and origin of the pointed shoes—Fashions in hair: the wig—Trailing sleeves—State dresses, State gloves—Dress of Norman ladies—Costume of the commonalty.

"Dost thou possess the dower
Of laws to spare or kill?
Call it not heavenly power
When but a tyrant's will."
Ancient Poems (Percy Society).

With the Normans there came a marked distinction between the costume of different classes. The Norman noble wore his tunic longer than the Saxon chief, clothed his legs in hose and his feet in short boots. Over the tunic he wore a sleeveless surcoat, and over this again he threw his mantle, rich and ample, with a large hood; for the Normans were more accustomed than the English to covering their heads. They cut their hair short, and sometimes shaved the back of the head, and kept their faces clean shaven, like priests. Besides the hood, the Normans had close caps, which sometimes took the

place of helmets in battle, and conical cloth hats. The king and the more luxurious nobles had their hats lined with fur, and ornamented with precious stones, the head being a favourite place for displaying the most costly jewellery. As has been seen, the Saxons liked colour and ornamentation; but the Normans had a much showier taste. As if to mark their superiority of fortune, the invaders who ousted the English from their possessions, who sat in their halls, ruled over their lands, ministered in their churches, and held sway in the great offices of State, flaunted before the people their gay robes, their costly silk, and fur, and jewels. Both the Normans and the Flemings (who came over at the same time, in large numbers) showed a liking for finery, and were said to be proud of their good looks. It was a pity they did not trust to Nature a little more. Under the second William the extravagance and eccentricity of costume were very marked. Then arose the fashion of pointed shoes, which originated with Count Fulk of Anjou, whose feet being misshapen by bunions, he bethought him of a new method of hiding the protuberances, and had his boots and shoes made with long, pointed toes extending beyond the foot. These "pigaciæ," as they were called, the forerunners of the "poulaines," "caught on," in modern parlance, and,

spreading through Normandy, were transmitted to England. William Rufus took up the fashion eagerly, and it lasted for some three centuries. By way of variety an ingenious person started the idea of stuffing the points with tow, and turning them up in the shape of a ram's horn. These ridiculous boots were worn by many people who were too poor to affect the other follies of the rich. They were made of leather, of the sort called "bazans;" but they were not plain on that account, for leather is a substance admitting of a good deal of treatment, and was used for ornamental purposes, as has already been mentioned. It is difficult to reconcile the beautifully embroidered articles seen on men's feet in pictures of the period with the ordinary uses of a boot, especially as we are accustomed to such very simple foot-gear. Probably the short boots the Normans wore for riding were not such dainty affairs. The long gowns prevent us from forming much idea of the women's boots, but they are never represented as wearing the long, pointed toes. Stockings were made of cloth, sometimes long and sometimes short, reaching halfway to the knee. The short stockings, which had a rough, unfinished look, were probably thick and coarse, or they would never have kept in place; they were more fitted for the dress of rustics. The stockings worn by

William Rufus are said to have cost large sums of money, and, judging by the king's wardrobe, stockings were an expensive item in a nobleman's dress.

Although the Normans came with their hair short, they soon let it grow in imitation of the English, whose thick, flowing locks they much admired. Having got their hair long, they next proceeded to curl it, and very severe are the strictures of the moralists on the men who parted their hair in the middle, curled it with irons, and scented and bound it with ribbons like women. They also took to beards, which they likewise curled. The long curled hair and beard were thought a great scandal, and strictly forbidden to the clergy, who were thus free to condemn what they could not enjoy. But the fashion of wearing the hair changed several times under the Norman dynasty, and too quickly for Nature to follow suit. So when, after a period of short hair, the taste swerved back, an expedient had to be devised to effect the change, and in the reign of Stephen wigs were worn. This fancy only lasted a short time, however, and that sudden appearance and disappearance of the wig, which was not revived for so many centuries, is one of the most curious freaks of fashion. The women never cut their hair short, and were, apparently, under no

temptation to add to its length by artificial means, but, if we may trust contemporary satirists, the art of dyeing the hair was practised. It was generally worn in two long plaits, or in two tails bound with ribbon, when seen at all. Only young girls wore the hair loose.

Another extravagance which the Normans introduced was that of wearing very long tunics, trailing on the ground, with full sleeves falling over the hands. This was a fashion that was necessarily confined to the well-to-do, and made a very marked difference between the costume of the nobles and of the commonalty. The long sleeves, which at first seem to have served the purpose of mufflers for the hands, grew and grew. They were worn by both sexes, and in the women's dress they hung down to the ground from the wrist, like pockets, and had to be tied up in knots to keep them out of the wearer's way when walking. This long, hanging piece was of a different colour from the rest of the sleeve, and the border was handsomely embroidered. The fashion is thought to have originated in Italy, and to have come to us through France and Normandy.

State dresses were, of course, always longer and fuller than others. The mantles were very splendid, and lined with rare furs. The Normans were good furriers, and made ample use of the many furry

animals they found abounding in England. They were clever goldsmiths and jewellers, too, and Norman and Saxon skill together furnished abundant means for the gratification of the most luxurious taste. Among the finery of the male sex were jewelled gloves. On special occasions they were worn by men of high rank, though not, at this period, by women; but they were treated more as an ornament than as part of clothing. Before gloves were at all common, what may be called State gloves existed, embroidered and jewelled, such as would be worn by the higher clergy for ceremonials. Size was not much considered. It was a long while before gloves were made in soft, elastic materials, fitting the hand accurately. They were adornments, not coverings, and were handed down in legacies, like other property.

Girdles were not so much worn by the Norman ladies, who laced their gowns tightly—sometimes very tightly—up the front. Besides lengthening their sleeves, they lengthened their kerchiefs, or veils—which were of fine linen or silk for the rich—until the long ends swept the ground, and, like the sleeves, had to be tied in knots. The kerchief was worn in different ways. One lady would carelessly throw it over her head, leaving the throat uncovered; another would wind it round her head

and neck, like a wrap. Later on, the kerchief dwindled to a cap or low turban, the hair being gathered up in a caul underneath. Some head-covering, even indoors, was deemed essential, and the tendency was to make it stiffer and closer. The queen did not wear the crown next to her hair, but over the kerchief.

The ordinary civil dress of the Normans was not unlike that of the Saxons. At the time of the Conquest the commonalty of both nations wore short tunics, leg-bandages, and short boots. There were also worn low shoes and long hose, or a close kind of pantaloon with feet. For travelling and bad weather there was a mantle with a cowl, or hood. Very likely the Saxon peasant often went barelegged, as did his forefathers; and the Norman rustic dispensed with the luxury of a shirt, and went clad simply in tunic and trousers: these latter garments were entirely relegated to the use of the labouring folk. The slave was marked by the heavy iron ring round his neck. Women of the poorer classes wore their kirtles and gowns shorter and of coarser materials, but the form of dress being so simple served for rich and poor alike. There were very few pieces in the costume, and no separate accessories. Out of doors the hooded mantle was all that was required by the daintiest

lady. No one had thin and thick jackets, capes, ulsters, and cloaks of varying degrees to suit the season; and there were no trifles such as lace veils, gloves, and neckerchiefs. A Norman lady's wardrobe showed an admirable simplicity which we may well envy.

CHAPTER IV.

Military dress of the Saxons, Danes, and Normans — Chain mail armour — Shields and helmets — Weapons — Scotch armour—Ecclesiastical dress—Luxurious lives of Norman prelates.

"Whoso with riches deals,
And thinks peace bought and sold,
Will find them slippery eels,
That slide the firmest hold;
Though sweet as sleep with health
Thy lulling luck may be,
Pride may o'er stride thy wealth
And check prosperity."

Ballads and Songs (Percy Society).

THE Saxons, as soon as they adopted body-armour, weighted themselves with heavy tunics of mail, which they found so cumbersome when fighting with the Welsh that they changed them for tunics of leather. But the shirt of mail or byrnie, made of interlaced rings, was the usual coat of defence. It came down to the knee, and they wore on their legs the cross-garterings of civil costume, rather despising the Normans for encasing their nether limbs in mail. They armed

themselves with wooden shields covered with leather, having rims of gold and silver, and their heads were protected with leather caps. For weapons they carried short daggers, spears, javelins, swords—long, broad, and double-edged—as well as the national bow and arrow. The Danes appeared at first very scantily armed; but about the time of Canute they adopted a steel tunic with hood and sleeves, and pantaloons covering the feet.* Their shields were generally painted red. Among the Saxons was instituted the sword-dance, for which those taking part were clad simply in a shirt, and a hat or helmet with long black ribbons.†

The Normans, who fought as a rule on horseback, only the common soldiers fighting on foot, were completely clothed in chain mail from top to toe. They even had mufflers of mail for the hand, and their heads were encased in a mailed hood. To keep the rings from rubbing the body, they wore under the mail coat a kind of thick vest stuffed with cotton, which they called a gambeis, or gambeson. Their shields were not oval like the Saxons, but were much flatter. They were richly gilded, and bore devices of various sorts, though no heraldic bearings. The shield had a band of leather to fasten it round the neck, so

* Meyrick, *Antient Armour.* † *Ibid.*

leaving the hands free. Their chief weapon was the lance, to which, when borne by knights or commanders, was added a small flag or streamer—the "gonfanon;" a name also given to the standard carried about near the commander-in-chief. The Normans were very skilful in the use of the bow on horseback, but their archers fought both mounted and unmounted. In the reign of William Rufus we see some changes in the form of the armour, and instead of the close straight coat of mail, there is a hauberk slit up at the sides, and with wide sleeves bordered with gold or some gilded material. The under-tunic is plainly visible, and the legs have no better defence than rather high boots. Knights are sometimes represented in the saddle with the long, pointed shoes, the pointed part curving downwards to keep the shoe from slipping out of the stirrup. Through the slit on the right side the scabbard of the sword peeps out, being fastened underneath the hauberk. The sleeves of the hauberk were made close in the following reign, and instead of the hose and boots, the feet and legs were completely encased again in mail. There was a constant change in head-gear. The conical cap or helmet of the Saxons was adopted by the Normans with the addition of a small projecting plate to protect the nose. Then it became in turns

flat, cylindrical, high and tapering. The helmet was of less consequence, as the mail hood protected the back and sides of the head.

The Scotch, at this time, seem to have adopted a species of armour made to imitate the scales of fish. It was a tunic of mail with hood and wide sleeves, and a skirt of mail was afterwards attached. But in Norman times the fighting-men were not regularly armed. The men from the Eastern Lowlands carried pikes, the men from the Western Lowlands javelins with sharp points, and they clad themselves as they pleased. The true Highlanders wielded long broadswords, and carried wooden shields covered with stout leather on their left arms. They were distinguished by the feathers in their caps, and their long striped mantles. Chiefs of clans were attired precisely in the same way as their followers, except that their feathers were larger. Body-armour was not at all universal. Men came armed for the fight in coats of mail or quilted doublets according to their fancy and their means, and the native cavalry rode the best horses each man could procure. The contrast between the Scotch soldier and the Norman knight is strikingly brought out in the charge addressed by the Bishop of Durham when he was about to lead a handful of Norman nobles against the large army mustered in

the north by David, King of Scotland. "Your head," he begins, "is covered with the helmet, your breast with a coat of mail, your legs with greaves, and your whole body with the shield. Where can the enemy strike you when he finds you sheathed in steel? What have we to fear in attacking the naked bodies of men who know not the use of armour?"

Turning to ecclesiastical dress, there was not much difference in early English times between the clergy and the laity. The priest, save when performing the duties of his office, had no distinguishing mark, except the tonsure. In the ninth and tenth centuries, there was no special garb assigned to the lower clergy for their outside garments. They seem to have worn much the same form of costume and the same colours as other men when they went abroad about their daily work. But the official dress, especially of the higher clergy, increased in richness as civil dress became more luxurious. After the ninth century, the vestments were more sumptuous. In the eleventh century we see the mitre worn; and in the twelfth, bishops always appear with beautifully brocaded collars studded with jewels, and embroidered caps. The sumptuary laws of Henry I., who instituted a reform in dress generally, were directed only against

the secular costume of the clergy, not against their sacerdotal robes. Norman prelates lived like princes, with trains of servants and horses; they were served on gold and silver plate, and clad in the finest linen and the richest stuffs. They amassed hoards of money. On the death of one Bishop of London, not only was an immense quantity of treasure found in his coffers, but even his very boots were stuffed with gold and silver. There were many murmurings against the Church, its worldliness and rapacity. A priesthood, says one satirical poet, "Sine fructu," "Sine sensu," "Sine causa."

"Ordo monasticus ecclesiasticus unde vocatur,
Quando tenacibus atque rapacibus assimilatur?" *

* T. Wright, *Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the Twelfth Century.*

CHAPTER V.

Wealth of England as compared with Normandy—Manufactures and arts—The Flemish weavers and improvement of wool trade—Scotch commerce and dress.

"Wit comes with waxing."

Icelandic Proverb.

It is strange to find no new clothing materials brought in by the Normans. One would have expected them to have been acquainted with many things unknown to England in its insular position. But they added nothing: England was to them a land of riches, and they laid greedy hands on all its available wealth, despoiling monasteries to enrich Norman churches, and carrying off costly embroideries, gold and silver work, and quantities of money to show the people of Normandy what a rich country they had conquered. For the Normans who had been left behind soon began to show signs of discontent, especially the women whose husbands had taken service with the Duke,

while some of those who came over were anxious to return and see after their own possessions. The soldiers who had fought and won for their leader were rewarded with large sums in English gold, that none might say they had suffered loss by following Duke William. There was so much money left in the treasury by Harold, that William was able to send handsome presents to the Pope, and on the church of Caen he bestowed great treasures. The Normans were astonished at the exquisite workmanship of the ornaments sent over. English jewellers and other craftsmen had been exercising their arts for more than four centuries, and they had been assisted by German artists who were in the habit of resorting to England. Gold was so abundant in England that Earl Godwin sent Hardicanute a galley with gilded rostra, and manned by eighty men with gold bracelets on each wrist, of which the value came to £200,000 (present value). Precious stones were imported from the East, and a variety of luxuries from Italy and other Southern parts, and even fine work made by foreign artists. But English workers could, at that period, compete with most nations in the finer sorts of handicraft, as shown by the carved ivories and bronzes still extant. Although agriculture had declined during the struggles between the Britons and Saxons and

the Saxons and Danes, and the export of corn fell off completely, there was plenty of sheep-rearing, and the Flemings used to import English wool for their manufactures before the Conquest. When William seized the Crown, English commerce was fairly flourishing, but the turmoil of the invasion threw it back, and it was some years before the country was sufficiently quiet to profit by the presence of the luxurious foreigners, who scorned trade as an occupation, but aided its development by their numerous wants.

It was the Flemings who gave the start to the woollen manufactures. They were a clever, industrious people, well skilled in the making of cloth, and England produced better wool than could be got elsewhere. Numbers of Flemings came over with the first Normans, and under Henry I. a colony was regularly established in Pembrokeshire. From that time onward, the cloth industry revived, and in 1153 a charter was granted to the Priory of St. Bartholomew to hold an annual fair, which afterwards became the great cloth fair.

During this period Scotland, which had not suffered like England from the shock of the Norman invasion, was peacefully pursuing a course of commercial prosperity, increasing its imports and developing its cloth manufacture. In the eleventh

century its foreign trade was much encouraged by the enterprising policy of Queen Margaret, who invited merchants from abroad to come to her court with their sumptuous wares, and then made the courtiers buy these costly stuffs. The Scotch, like other nations in their barbarous days, loved ornament, and decked themselves with the native products—shale, horn, bronze, jet, and stone. They also had some gold and silver, and their bracelets, rings, and necklaces are said to have been very handsome. The Romans, who saw little of the Scotch except when fighting, thought that they always went unclad as they appeared in battle, but they probably wore the striped cloth garments which their kinsfolk in Gaul adopted. During the Norman Period there were no striking specialities to distinguish Scotch from English dress.

CHAPTER VI.

Recreations of the Saxons and Normans—Influence of Norman rule on the country.

"Wæs se fruma egeslic
Céodum on lande."
(The beginning was dreadful
To the people in the land.)
Anglo-Saxon Poems.

THE Saxons and Normans had much in common as regards sports and pastimes, but that fact did not draw them any closer together; on the contrary, it gave rise to extra oppression and tyranny on the part of the conquerors. Hunting was the great recreation of the English in præ-Norman days. They were proud of their skill in horsemanship, and they were capital archers, archery being a favourite pastime. The Norman nobles also liked hunting, and they liked it so well that they razed to the ground churches and even whole villages for the sake of getting a wider field for their sport. The game laws were very severe, and made into an engine of persecution. Hawking was another

aristocratic pastime which both peoples enjoyed, and which was placed under regulations. Women constantly took part in these sports, and for archery and hawking they do not appear to have worn any special kind of dress. Music was heard both in the Saxon homestead, where the wandering gleeman found a welcome, and in the Norman hall, where he appeared as the minstrel, or *jongleur;* but it did not seem to have a refining influence on either nation. The Saxon is accused of spending his leisure quaffing the wine-cup; and the Norman, if he drank more temperately, was fiercer and ruder in spirit. When he rode abroad, his delight was to harry travellers, to show his power by plundering the poor and insulting helpless women. It seemed, at first, as if for the Norman everything was made easy, while for the Saxon life was hard and bitter. He was taxed to the uttermost to supply the greed of his foreign masters, to enable them to wear delicate raiment and glittering jewels, and to live in substantial houses and lordly castles. The Norman noble spoke contemptuously of the Saxon churl as lawful prey, and openly held up to scorn his language, his manners, and his dress. The Saxon saw in the Norman only a foreign enemy, whom he could not dispossess. What peace could there be between those two?

And yet a better order of things was being gradually developed. In spite of their arrogance and avarice, the Normans introduced lasting improvements. Under William I. the Domesday Book was compiled—that record of the survey of the land which was so sorely needed. The Normans taught the Saxons how to build better houses; they dotted the country with embattled castles and noble churches, and the wonders of their architecture make us forget the evils of the system of which those magnificent piles were the outcome; for every Norman baron was a petty king in his own castle, which was fortified against inroads, and, swarming with armed retainers, a menace to all lowlier neighbours; while the churches were filled with haughty priests, who were strangers to their flocks.

Fortunately for the country, the invaders were not all men of rank and wealth. In the wake of the nobles came many Norman traders to what was to them an Eldorado compared with their own country, where border warfare was constantly hampering their business, and money was not nearly so abundant. The fusion of the two nations began in the middle classes, among the merchants and burghers, who lived and worked side by side. As under the stern Norman rule order was restored,

the laws were more strictly enforced, and the country began to prosper again, Saxon and Norman regarded each other with less bitterness. Instead of the harsh relation of conqueror and conquered, there grew up the gentler tie of common citizenship.

PLANTAGENET PERIOD.

MIDDLE OF TWELFTH TO BEGINNING OF FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

TURBULENCE AND TRANSITION.

WARS without and strifes within the kingdom, fierce contests around the throne, a political constitution struggling into existence, native manufactures in their infancy, and foreign trade only just rising into importance — such is the picture which England presents at the opening of the Plantagenet Era. Not a period, certainly, in which we can expect to find the art of dress making any steady progress, but one rather in which the laws of harmony and beauty will be continually violated; in which caprice will take the place of judgment, and taste will be governed by the changing influences of a disturbed social system. It was not as if we were one people in the sense in which at a later period we became united. Every nation is a mixture of elements, but in England there were then two nationalities, which, a hundred years before, had been quite distinct, occupying the soil side by side in growing

friendliness. The governing class and the governed were of different stocks; but those who had come, first as conquerors, and had ruled as tyrants, were as ready now to fight for the land of their adoption, and to defend its rights, as were the sons of the soil. And yet they were French in their manners, customs, habits, and dress, and had made those with whom they associated so far French too, that what were once symbols of a foreign domination had come to be regarded as signs of superiority. Only the villeins who tilled the land remained as they were before the days of William the Norman.

Every event of that restless time tended to make the English more susceptible to outside influences. Foreign wars, foreign queens—above all, French wars and French queens—kept our social life constantly changing. At a time when locomotion was exceedingly difficult, when travelling by sea was slow and perilous, the English were far more Continental in their ways than when science had bridged the gulfs of space and time. Intercourse with France was close and intimate, in spite of the turbulent waters that rolled between. When our kings held large dominions in France, and spent a great deal of time and money in defending their French possessions, it was but natural that the two nations should have adopted each other's

customs and ways. In the matter of dress it has generally been the English who have copied the French. During the Plantagenet era England and France ran a neck-and-neck race for novelties, but the bizarre fashions which distinguish that period were most of them French in origin, or were first acquired by the French, who passed them on to the English. The French do not seem then to have developed that sense of fitness in costume which, in spite of lapses into extravagance, has made their standard the measure for all civilized nations in later times. They, too, were affected by the unstable state of society, and the general absence of cultivation in taste and manners was not atoned for by an innate perception of the difference between what is merely striking and what is pleasing. As for the English, they have never laid claim to the artistic faculty in dress; but at no earlier period was it so lacking as when they were struggling into national life amid a social and political upheaval, stretching out their arms east and west, fighting the Saracen and quarrelling with the Frank, dazzled by glimpses of the luxury of ancient civilizations, greedily fingering the rich silks and velvets woven under burning skies, clutching at gleaming jewels and gold and silver like children with gaily painted toys, fashioning their garments after those of their neighbours,

however strange the guise; delighting in oddity, inconvenience, ugliness even, for the sake of change; caught by every whimsical notion, regardless of beauty, caring only for what arrested the eye by its strangeness. As we pass the period in review, we shall see the strong and ever-present influence of the military character of the age, and note the striking contrast between the stern events of that bloodshedding epoch and the childish follies which filled up the intervals between strife; we shall see devastating wars yielding wholesome fruit, and the great tree of commerce spreading its branches far and wide; we shall see the middle class rising into importance, luxuries multiplying and enjoyed by a larger number; and, in the background, we shall see the peasant toiling away in serfdom, looking much as he did when the Normans came over, clad always in his coarse garments, standing out like a dull-hued moth in the midst of a swarm of gay butterflies.

CHAPTER II.

SQUALID DWELLINGS AND SUMPTUOUS DRESSES.

Mode of living among the wealthy classes—Interior of mediæval houses—Absence of comforts—Contrast between luxuriousness of apparel and bareness of dwellings.

Social and domestic life in England under the Plantagenets showed some curious contrasts. Profusion and bareness, luxury and discomfort, went side by side. Domestic life, in our sense of the word, was not, indeed, developed. It was impossible that it should be, in an age when the dwelling of the rich man partook more of the nature of a hostelry, and that of the poor hardly deserved the name of a house at all. While the peasant crouched in a rude shanty, shared, perhaps, by some four-footed creatures, the lord and the gentleman occupied a noble barn, built of stout timbers, solid, massive, and frequently handsome, but bare of the commonest conveniences and comforts. In mediæval times, to have many separate rooms or much

furniture was not felt to be necessary. The feudal system, which made of every lord of the manor, of every noble and landed proprietor, a petty king in his own domain, did not encourage privacy or seclusion in the home. The first requisite of a mansion was a great hall, where all the family, dependents, and retainers could meet at one common board, where every one could enter who had business with the head of the household. In days when the scarcity of inns and the difficulties and perils of travelling made hospitality a cardinal virtue, the hall was open to any passing stranger who craved rest and refreshment. At night it became the common sleeping-place, except for the ladies, who retired to an upper chamber called the "solarium." An apartment which served such varied purposes, and was the rendezvous of a mixed company, could not, obviously, be furnished, in our sense of the word. Sometimes the soil itself formed the floor, the ground being strewn with rushes, though boarded floors were also used. In winter it must have been dark and draughty, for ill-fitting wooden shutters and lattices filled up the windows, glass being a luxury for some time after its introduction into private houses in the thirteenth century. The roads were rough and glaziers were few, so that it was not an easy matter for even the wealthy to

have glass windows, although the cost of the material does not seem to have been great in proportion to its scarcity.

There were no such things as blinds, curtains, or even carpets in the days of the earlier Plantagenets, the custom of carpeting the floor having been introduced by the Spaniards who came over when Eleanor of Castile became the wife of Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward I. Carpets were laid down in the Princess's apartments by her countrymen, whose ways excited great astonishment among the English, by whom floor-coverings were regarded as the refinement of luxurious effeminacy. The wealthy classes were content with the simplest furniture, their chief luxury being the bed, which, as it stood in the upper chamber, where the ladies received visitors as well as slept, was an object of pride. This chamber was really the ladies' sitting-room, the place where they wove, spun, and embroidered, and does not seem to have contained any of the usual accessories of a bedroom.

Clothes were kept in a separate apartment called the wardrobe-room; and as service was cheap and plentiful, every one of any pretensions to rank was waited on by dependants, who fetched and carried and performed many offices rendered necessary by the want of more appliances. Sometimes pegs for

hanging clothes on were put up in the sleeping-chamber, and a perch for that constant companion of both ladies and gentlemen—the hawk.*

Nothing is more curious than to contrast the luxuriousness of apparel among the upper classes with the bareness and discomfort of their dwellings, which yet showed great improvements on those of earlier times. There were few skilled workmen, and each household had to learn to rely on its own resources for mechanical repairs and improvements. So changes and additions in the house were few. Imagine the ladies in their trailing gowns stepping gingerly over the damp and often dirty rushes in the hall, sitting in carpetless, curtainless rooms on benches—for a chair was a special luxury,—with the rain and wind blowing in through the lattices. One would expect to find every one dressed in thick serge or coarse calico, with short gowns and strong serviceable boots; instead of which, the ladies and gallants of that period were extravagantly fond of costly stuffs, long trains, and fantastic shoes.

Although the bed-chamber was so ill provided with the simplest adjuncts to the toilette, and the polished mirror was a sorry substitute for the looking-glass, dyes, face-washes, paints, and curling-irons were in common use among fashionable folk.

* Alex. Neckham, treatise *De Utensilibus.*

How mediæval ladies and gentlemen performed their elaborate dressing under such conditions is a puzzle. The love of ornamentation, however, always precedes the appreciation of comfort: the homeless savage who lives by his spear will deck himself out in plumes and paint, and the modern factory girl will go hungry rather than forego the gay feathers in her hat. So, while in Plantagenet times there was an absence of the most elementary comforts even among the wealthy, and necessaries like sleeping-suits and night-gowns were quite unknown, not to mention such superfluities as dressing-gowns and slippers, costume was sumptuous and complicated, and occupied as much time and attention as at any later period.

But, for all their brave apparel, there was a simplicity and hardiness about our ancestors in the Middle Ages which we have long ago lost. They rose with the sun, and retired to bed at an hour when we are just beginning our evening amusements. They started for their hunting and hawking while the peasants were going to work in the fields; they dined at the time we breakfast, and had supped before we think of dining. They dressed not according to the hour, but the occupation. When the lord sallied forth bent on sport, he would be arrayed accordingly, with bow and arrows, hunting-

spear, and boots; if going on a journey, he would be well hooded and cloaked, and armed against highwaymen. The lady, when occupied with her maidens, spinning and weaving, and making up cloth into garments for the household, superintending the household work, brewing simples in case of sickness, or distilling herbs, would probably wear a plain kirtle and wimple. But she would be arrayed more gaily when she walked in the gardens, or sat over her silk embroidery, or played chess with her lord. For the young squires and demoiselles who, in feudal castles, formed part of the household, being sent to learn the duties appertaining to their station, there were more lively games when the weather was bad, and love-making could not be carried on in the well-tended garden with its pleasant alleys and greenswards.

It was not a state of society that admitted of "calls," at least for womankind, who were pretty much confined to the precincts of their own habitation. "Visiting costumes" were not in vogue, but the ladies were careful to have smart dresses for tournaments and for hunting, in both of which they took great delight, while serviceable mantles and headgear were in readiness for occasional journeys, the quality and style of all their garments depending more on the rank of the wearer

than on the fashion. London might follow the mode of the Court, but it was rarely that knights and ladies living in the country could get a glimpse of new styles, though they doubtless did their best to keep up with the follies of the day. But when we think of London with its handful of twenty thousand inhabitants, and of the sparseness of the population of the country generally, which barely amounted to four millions by the end of the fifteenth century, we shall realize that in such a small and scattered community, in an age when roads were few and bad and equestrianism was the general mode of locomotion, costume was not likely to be uniform, but would be affected by conditions of time and place, which became modified as increasing civilization broke down the barriers of distance and introduced new manners and customs.

CHAPTER III.

Dress of the nobles and upper classes—Love of brilliance and novelty—The peaked shoes, or "Crackowes"—Costliness of dress—Wimples and odd head-dresses—Parti-coloured costumes—Manner of riding among ladies—The *cote-hardie*—Emblazoned surcoats and gowns.

"Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is?"
Much Ado about Nothing, act iii. sc. 3.

As lived the king, so lived the noble and the gentleman. The relations of the sovereign to his people were intimate in those days, and the habits and character of the monarch exercised more influence on the nation when social life was less complex. It was customary then for kings to make frequent journeys to different parts of the country. The system of government required it. Only by personal attendance and supervision could the king in many cases redress grievances or make his power felt by refractory subjects. Parliaments were held, not at Westminster only, but in various cities, and this would cause the king to lodge with

his retinue for several days in or near a provincial town, and would bring the royal presence and personalty into close contact with numbers of people who never travelled beyond their own district. Everything connected with the royal train, their habits, apparel, expenditure, would be freely discussed. Most of the Plantagenet kings were extravagant and luxurious. They spent freely and set an example of high living, with the exception of Edward I., who, with all his liberality, kept his household expenses within much narrower bounds than his father or his son.

The tastes of the time were limited pretty much to shows and feastings. What scanty literature existed was inaccessible except to a very few. The tournament was the great amusement of the age, as fighting was its chief business. Within doors the Court and the nobles found their recreation in pageants and masquerades, in the tricks of common buffoons and jugglers, and in the songs and lutes of the minstrels. Both king and courtiers took part in the masquerades. In the wardrobe rolls of our Plantagenet sovereigns we find mention of all sorts of fantastically devised and ornamented dresses to be worn in these extraordinary shows. When the king and his knights were not fighting foreign enemies or engaged in domestic broils, they were

squandering money on feasts and tournaments, revels and hunts, for which they decked themselves in the costliest attire that could be devised. The knight, when he returned from the wars, put off his armour and became a fop. A love of luxury had seized all Europe. Our neighbour France, with whom, whether in hostility or in friendship, we were closely associated throughout the Middle Ages, was to the fore in the taste for extravagance. The opening up of the East, the mingling of nations by the passage across Europe of armed hosts, pilgrims, and ecclesiastics, the influx of products from countries hitherto almost unknown, the consequent development of the power of the trading class, affected the whole social life of Western Christendom.

It was distinctively a military period: war or its rumour was never absent for a day. For men to be well armed was more essential than to be well clothed, and the dress of the age bore witness to this necessity. Constant changes and improvements were being made in armour, but it was not enough to be simply protected from dart and spear and sword-thrust: men desired to be not only equipped, but splendidly equipped for the fray. So we see more and more magnificence in the military as well as in the civil habit. In spite of the

long strain upon the country caused by the Crusades, the heavy taxes, the domestic revolutions arising from the frequent absence of the sovereign, in spite of the civil wars which were waged throughout the whole Plantagenet Period, and the recurring embroilments with France, there was never more love of gaiety among the nobles, more indulgence in personal adornment, more childish delight in novelties and follies. Brilliant colours, curious shapes, costly and fantastic fashions, marked the costume of the upper classes. Dress bore little relation to the needs of the body or the comfort and convenience of the wearer. To be gay and striking was the aim of all who could afford to indulge their taste, and they certainly achieved their end.

Motley figures clad in strange guise flit before us as we look on at tournament or revel, or take a peep inside the king's palace, or some noble castle where the knights are paying court to the ladies. The gentlemen are walking about encumbered with their "long-peked shone" stretching several inches beyond their toes. These shoes are of some coloured material; no such thing as plain black leather is used. Some are wearing boots made of elaborately embroidered stuff. The long peaks, which really came in with the Normans, have been clung to by the Plantagenets, and are becoming

longer every year. Their high heels do not make walking easier, and really it must be difficult to keep up a dignified appearance when stepping over the rushes in the hall. One would be in danger of tripping at every step. Those gay shoes will soon soil, too; no wonder that thrifty rhymester wrote—

"With your long-peked shone
Therefore your thrifte is almost don."

They even go to church, we hear, in these long peaks, and the clergy, far from rebuking their congregation, would strut about in the same fashion themselves, if they were not expressly forbidden to wear such shoes. Some of the gallants are finding out that their toes are sadly in the way, and have fastened the points to the knee by gold and silver chains. They call them *poulaines*, or "Polish points," and "Crackowes," after the city of Cracow, because the Poles are said to have originated this fashion. It is quite as much followed in France, and has been adopted indeed all over Europe with great avidity, for some inscrutable reason.

With these "Crackowes" they are wearing very brightly coloured hose, crossed up the leg with a kind of garter, which looks like a survival of the old Saxon leg-bandages. But some of the gallants are gayer still: they have one leg green and the other red, well displayed under their short tunics. Those

who wear a longer gown have slit it up the side as far as the thigh to exhibit their hose, which is thought very unseemly by some sterner spirits. We may, if we please, follow the gentlemen to mass, where, as the satirist says,—

> "Whan other kneelis, *pro Christo vota ferentes*,
> Thei stonde on here helis, *sed no curvare valentes*,
> For hurtyng of here hose, *non inclinare laborant;*
> I trow, for her long toes, *dum stant ferialiter orant.*"

Those rich tunics, made of that fine silky stuff called *siclaton*, brought from the East, with the jewelled girdle and small ornamental dagger hanging to the clasp in front, those splendid mantles, shining with gold thread, made by the Syrian weavers, are decidedly fair-weather garments. They were never meant for our sulky skies. And what will become of those crisply curling ringlets and jaunty caps in a shower of rain? There are no carriages; every one must either ride or walk. The lady looks as little fitted as the lord to tread the highways. Her voluminous gown is trailing behind her in a long tail. She has a beautifully embroidered girdle studded with gems round her waist. We cannot see much of her hair under that bright kerchief with the jewelled pins, but it seems to be all gathered up into a caul of gold thread, and she has made it stand out quite stiffly. That one has her

hair braided with gold wire, the plaits just showing beneath her head-dress. Some have arranged their hair in two bulging projections at the side, and have stuck little flat caps, exactly like small plates, on their heads.

How yellow all the ladies' hair looks, as if it had been dyed in saffron! One lady with the side projections has a small feather rising straight up in front of her head. She is a lady of noble birth, it is clear: her gown is a mass of embroidery; it has a collar of miniver turned down to show her necklace; the sleeves are immensely wide and scolloped out in the fashionable leaf pattern, and so is the border of the gown half a yard from the bottom; her broad girdle is of gold, with three long tassels, and she glitters like a gay butterfly, so many are the colours in her costume. Beside her goes a dame with a scarlet gown deeply bordered with ermine and a truly regal dalmatic—we can call her mantle by no lesser name—of light blue lined with orange. She is wearing two rows of gold beads, with a large pendant round her neck and a single row of precious stones. Several ladies are wearing long skirts and short jackets bordered with fur, which they call "spencers." They are becoming enough to slight and well-made figures, though rather trying to both the stout and the angular.

What a variety of head-dresses—square, round, flat, high! and how trying these odd shapes are to the face, especially those stiff, reticulated frames which encircle the head! But, alas! there are some ladies who look half throttled, poor things, pinned up in their silken wimples. One is in a white cloth wimple, like a nun, wrapped round her head and throat right up to the chin. Not a glimpse of hair is to be got under these wimples, and the contour of the face is quite destroyed, for the eyes and nose are the only parts left untouched. By-and-by we shall see no more of these ugly wimples, or gorgets as they are sometimes called, except among the nuns. A few young maidens are wearing their hair flowing over their shoulders, confined only by a chaplet of flowers, and how pretty and graceful they look! They are maidens of high degree, for this is quite a royal fashion.

Under the wimple we cannot see the neck of the gown, but the ladies with the cauls and head-dresses have their gowns cut round so as to show the throat. The sleeves are loose and wide, displaying the close sleeves of the tunic beneath. There are some who have tight sleeves embroidered from the elbow to the wrist and buttoned. Both mittens and gloves seem to be worn, and one or two have tucked their gloves into their

girdles instead of putting them on. They have thrown off their capacious mantles, but we can see the large brooches with which they are fastened and the handsome ermine borders.

But those are the gayest ladies who are riding by to the tournament. How strange they look in their parti-coloured costumes! One side of that lady's *cote-hardie* is red and the other blue, and she has laced it very tightly to give herself a small waist. They have gold and silver girdles, into which they have thrust small daggers and swords to imitate the gentlemen, and they have stuck little caps on their heads. Some are riding astride of their horses, which makes them look still more masculine. Side-saddles only came in with Queen Anne of Bohemia, the bride of King Richard II., but those who *are* sitting sideways have their left hand to the horse's head, with their feet hanging down quite straight, as if they were on a bench instead of a horse's back, as we have seen the Saxon ladies sometimes rode.*

* Mr. Wright, in his *Homes of Other Days*, says it is a mistake on the part of writers on costume to ascribe the introduction of the side-saddle to the queen of Richard II., but that Saxon ladies rode sideways "as in modern times." That they did ride sideways is pretty clear from the pictures; but as they do not appear to have been acquainted with the use of the pommel, and sat with their feet hanging down evenly without a stirrup, they can hardly be said to have ridden "as in modern times."

Here are the gentlemen, too, dressed all in the same fashion, with closely fitting coats like the ladies, and made in two colours. The gentlemen have been poaching on the ladies' preserves, for the *cote-hardie* was originally a feminine garment.

There are some gentlemen wearing large hoods, thrown back on their shoulders, with long points to them, and long white streamers hanging from their sleeves. The edges of their tunics and sleeves are all jagged. Very fantastic they look, and very uncomfortable they will feel when the wind rises, with all those pendants flapping in the air. They will have to dispose of the ends somewhere, like the miller in *The Reeve's Tale*, who wore his "typet," as these sleeve streamers are called, "y wounde about his head" when he went abroad. These gentlemen wear their girdles quite on the hips, only just above the edge of the short tunic. And such handsome girdles, too!—some are of chased gold set with jewels, but no one seems to be wearing diamonds; the goldsmiths and artificers have not learned to cut and polish that precious gem, and who cares for diamonds that do not glitter?

What a quantity of costly fur there is about! Those "pelissons" of the ladies, and the gentlemen's mantles, are all lined with sable, or ermine, or miniver. The gentlemen have all got short and

rather pointed beards. The only person with a long beard is that pilgrim with his staff and cross, who looks quite out of place among these smartly dressed folk. But the fine ladies and gentlemen have found something which has caught their fancy even in the pilgrim's costume; for see, they have long silken purses at their girdles, much richer, of course, than the one the priest has given for an alms-bag to the pilgrim, but worn in the same way. Ah, these are not like the days of the great Edward and good Queen Eleanor! Nobody thought then of cutting up their garments into all these odd shapes. People were content with simple gowns and mantles hanging in majestic folds, and did not wear half a dozen colours at once, like mountebanks.

Away goes a party of knights, with surcoats all covered with heraldic bearings over their armour. This is a very striking fashion, introduced of late years by the Crusaders. Heraldry itself is a new thing invented by this chivalric age. The simple device which a knight formerly bore on his shield has become quite an elaborate set of symbols. Edward III. was the first sovereign who introduced quarterings into the royal shield, dividing it into four parts, and quartering the arms of France with those of England after his great victories. Richard II.

added the arms borne by Edward the Confessor. From emblazoning their shields the knights have taken to emblazoning their surcoats and *jupons*. Even the ladies have seized on this fashion, and have quartered their family arms on their gowns. The French knights and ladies did it years ago, but they are always in the van where new modes are concerned.

Heraldry must be well understood by the tailors and sewing-women, though probably the ladies have worked the devices on their gowns themselves. They are very fond of embroidery and clever in making elaborate designs, so those saltires and chevrons, lions couchant, mullets in fess, falcons' heads, and escallops, they would take pleasure in arranging. The haughty dames are as proud of their quarterings as the knights, and, above all, they like to show them at a tournament where the choicest flowers of chivalry are contending for their favour, and will "show the virtue they have borne in arms."

The Church looks with frowning brows on these pageants, but they are dear to the nation. It is an age of romance and love, and chivalric devotion to womankind when "princes, and knights come from all parts of the world to joust and tourney" for love of some lady. Grim war, at which they

play so gaily, has slain its thousands, has brought pestilence and sorrow in its train, has ground the people with taxes; but the spirits of the highly born and wealthy are elastic, and youth with "wine, women, and horses" knows nothing of care:

> "A custode juvenis evolat et seris,
> Gaudet equis, canibus, aleis, et meris,
> Venator libidines, anceps mulieris,
> Utilium tardus provisor, prodigus æris."

CHAPTER IV.

THE RUGGED RACE.

Women's dress less variable during earlier part of Plantagenet Period—Dress of commonalty—Its comparative sameness—Scotch, Welsh, and Irish dress—Rank and class denoted by dress—Recreations of the commonalty.

WOMEN have always been credited with an inordinate love of change, and the fickleness of their taste in costume has been the theme of satirists in all ages. But there was a time when they showed far less disposition than men to adopt new fashions. Because in the present day men have chosen to affect a certain rigour in dress which does not admit of much variation, they are pleased to forget the quality of their toilet in the past, the number and mutability of their fashions, the elaboration and costliness of their attire, which equalled, nay exceeded, that of women. During the earlier portion of the Plantagenet Period, while lords and knights were launching out into all kinds of extravagances,

their wives and daughters clung to the simple Græco-Roman dress which was worn under the Normans, and indeed earlier. The long gowns falling to the feet in ample folds, the wide mantles, the simple kerchief, which were seen up to the reign of the second Edward, were almost the same as those worn by ladies in the Saxon era. With the influx of foreign goods and foreign fashions, and the growing taste in Western Europe for novelties and display, the classic simplicity of female costume was corrupted. Women began to dress to match the men. The French ladies succumbed earlier to the influences of the times, and as most of our queens came from France, and England swarmed with French nobles and their followers, it was inevitable that great ladies should follow the example of the lords and gallants, and deck themselves in the new modes that seemed to have been gathered from all quarters of the world. All fashions found a welcome here, and, as one satirist wrote,—

"The Englishman is for them all
And for each fashion coasteth."

But the commonalty were unaffected for a much longer period. The women's usual dress was the long plain kirtle, with sleeves sometimes tight to the wrist and sometimes wide. The men wore a plain tunic rather long, and open at the front, a

capacious hood which was frequently allowed to fall back on the shoulders, coarse breeches, and strong boots or long hose and shoes. For winter they had clumsy fingerless gloves, made of sheep-skin or some such material. Men sometimes wore a kind of leather hat instead of the hood, and both men and women wore soft caps or coifs of cloth, coming well over the ears. Mittens were worn by both sexes of the middle class, perhaps more often than gloves. Long tightly buttoned gowns, ungirdled, reaching from neck to heels, were also worn by men, instead of the girdled tunic. This would be more commonly the dress of a merchant or one engaged in city occupations. The dress varied with the season, and in summer a short tunic might be worn alone, while in winter there would be a surcoat added, with very long sleeves into which the hands could be comfortably tucked.

Although the hood was such a striking feature of the costume of this period among the middle and lower classes, it was not so universal a custom to cover the head out-of-doors as it is now. A nineteenth-century lad of the working class will hardly go a dozen yards in the open air without his cap, and town youths are reluctant to part with their hats even within-doors, covering their heads in factories and offices on every possible occasion. In the

Middle Ages hats, caps, and hoods were really a protection to the head, and not mere top-knots. They were worn for use rather than as part of the attire, and if the weather did not call for a head-covering, the hood would be thrown back or the cap laid aside. Women, on the contrary, almost invariably had their heads covered both indoors and out. The kerchief was for some time the general head-gear, varying in material with the means of the wearer. Gay colours were used, and a large quantity of stuff. Of the "Wif of Bathe" we read—

> "Hire kervechefs weren ful fyne of grounde,
> I durste swere they weyghede ten pounde
> That on a Sonday were upon hire heed."

But that was a festal dress, not such as would be worn on ordinary occasions. When, however, the good wife went riding, instead of her elaborate kerchiefs, she was—

> "Wymplid ful wel and on hire heed a hat
> As brood as is a bocler or a targe."

The wimple was not put off when the hat was put on, but the hat was fastened over it with some kind of pin, though not the sharply pointed steel skewers we use now. Caps generally had ear-flaps, and were tied under the chin; they were of various shapes for men, conical like a night-cap, or with a

long point falling over the side, or simply flat as the women wore them.

In Scotland men wore cloth bonnets ; and women before marriage a snood, after marriage a curch or linen coif. What Irish women wore on their heads it is difficult to say, probably only their own luxuriant hair, which the better sort fastened with bodkins. In Wales both men and women are said to have worn hats ; but Giraldus Cambrensis, writing in the twelfth century, describes them as wearing a large white cloth, wrapped about their heads in the form of a coronet, in Parthian fashion : " Mulieres autem peplo candido et amplo, more Parthico, in coronam per graduo erecto capita velant." The Welsh were a hardy people, who needed very few clothes, and wore the same all the year round : " Pallio namque tenui et interula solum omni tempore frigora pellunt." Like the Scotch, they generally went barefoot, or wore boots of rough hide.

Both Welsh and Irish were distinguished by always wearing cloaks, the Welsh colour being commonly blue, at least for women, and the Irish black, though the Irish chieftains must have indulged in a more gaudy costume, or they would not have found imitators among the English, who, in the fourteenth century, were forbidden to copy the Irish dress. Costume among the lower orders in

all three countries was in a rude state in the Middle Ages. Among the upper classes in Scotland French and English fashions prevailed.

There was a gulf between the nobility and the rest of the nation, between the gentle and the simple, which it has taken centuries to bridge over. One of the manifestations of this division was to be seen in the costume. At the present day there is little difference to be discerned between the apparel of a duke and that of his bailiff or steward, while the duchess and the tradesman's wife may wear precisely similar articles of dress without either exciting notice as being unsuitably attired. It has become impossible to discover a person's rank by his or her costume. But in the days of the Plantagenets it was easy to tell a lord from a plain citizen, or a lady of title from a burgher's wife. Both the style and quality of the garments differed more markedly when so many varied fashions and strange new stuffs came from abroad to renew the wardrobes of the upper classes.

As for the villeins and the working folk generally, it was impossible for them to ape the ways of their masters. The peasant was bound to his lord, on whose land he lived, and to whose protection he was entitled. He could not trade for himself or hold any property. He had no

opportunity of merging himself into the class above him unless he obtained his freedom. That he should change his ways was hardly possible, and the costume in which we beheld him in Saxon days he wore still with only slight variations.

A useful garment, the smock or blouse, was introduced in the reign of Edward I., and was generally adopted by the lower orders. The *bliaud*, worn in France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was the name given to a long, straight, closely fitting woman's tunic, with sleeves hanging from the wrist, and also to a somewhat similar article of knights' attire ; the English blouse was shorter and looser, more of a working dress. Fur of the cheaper sort was in use among the people from the earliest times. We do not now see our workmen and peasants in fur-lined coats, but in the Middle Ages lambskins, sheepskins, and the common furs, probably rather roughly dressed, formed a comfortable lining for the winter garments of the poor, whose dress consisted chiefly of fustian, frieze, kersey, "blanket," and russet. Neither the outward appearance nor the habitation of the villein underwent much alteration. He still wore his coarse fustian tunic, and sat in his dark wooden booth with a settle and a pot for furniture, while his superiors were changing the fashion of their garments from

day to day, were dining off gold and silver plate, and beginning to enjoy the luxury of an occasional glass window in their houses.

The middle classes, as they increased in importance and wealth, naturally began to indulge in more costly clothing, and we frequently hear of their elaborately embroidered gowns and tunics, silken fillets and expensive ornaments. Trade received a great impetus in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and a London citizen was a person of solidarity, noted for his good entertainment of strangers. It was the custom for members of the various trades and professions to wear a distinctive dress. The "sergeant of lawe," we read in *The Canterbury Tales*, was "gird with a seynt of silk with barres smale;" the haberdasher, carpenter, dyer and tapicer were all attired in their respective liveries. Men were not ashamed of wearing the marks of their occupation; they were rather proud of them than otherwise. Retainers wore a badge sewn on to the left sleeve with the armorial bearings of their lord, and in the time of Richard II. it was the general custom for servants to wear liveries.

The trade guilds were now becoming of great importance, and the members of these "solempne and gret fraternities," as Chaucer calls them, were distinguishable by a costume of some elaboration :—

"Ful freissh and newe here gere piked was;
Here knyfes were i-chapud nat with bras,
But al with silver wrought ful clene and wel,
Here gurdles and here pouches every del."

The "schipman" was more plainly attired, in a "gowne of faldyng to the knee"—"faldyng" being a kind of coarse cloth.

The recreations of the commonalty in the Middle Ages were nearly all of a boisterous kind, consisting of open-air sports. How they got through the long, dark winter evenings one sometimes wonders. Certainly they went to bed very early, but there must have been a good many idle hours between November and March. The people had neither the taste nor the means for sedentary amusements. Their houses were small, dark, and not furnished with anything beyond the most elementary necessities. In my lord's castle there was chess to while away time on wet cold days, but this never has been and never could be a people's game. Dice was the only recreation not calling for physical strength which the mass of the people enjoyed, and that was very popular, though it appears to have afforded little scope for skill and variety. It was known from very early times, and seems to have kept its hold upon the affections of the populace in all countries. But

rough sports and feats of endurance demanding muscle and wind were what the English delighted and excelled in during the Middle Ages; and men who both worked and played habitually in the open air must have been clothed in stout, loosely made garments, which gave the limbs plenty of freedom, and stood considerable wear and tear. Wrestling, throwing weights, and various games of ball were known, of which we have some trace in football and golf. Strutt says that football was prohibited by edict in the reign of Edward III. because it interfered with the practice of archery, skill with the bow being the most necessary of all accomplishments for an Englishman. Our archers won us many a battle. He also relates that a complaint was addressed by the king to the sheriffs of London, setting forth that shooting with arrows was being laid aside for useless games.

Another favourite pastime was running or riding at the quintain. This game took the place of the tournament with the citizens, yeomen, and others, for only knights and squires might joust and tilt. The merit of the quintain was that it could be adapted to the means of all classes. It might be turned into an almost knightly exercise by riding at the mark on horseback, and it served equally well as an amusement for those who did not possess

horses, but could show their agility in running at the stake, on which a board was fixed to represent a shield. The lance or stick carried to hit the mark was very long, and if, as was often the case, the game was played on the water, it required some skill to strike the board while being rowed swiftly along. This game of quintain suggests the popular modern sport, polo. Tilting or running at the ring was a somewhat similar game. People who were fond of sports of this kind—and they were played by Londoners as well as rustics—undoubtedly wore clothes tolerably adapted to such amusements; for the commonalty could not have afforded more than two suits at a time—if they had so much—and these would have to serve for work and general wear as well as play. Men certainly played in their ordinary garments, only sometimes throwing aside the large hood.

Our people have always delighted in shows, and a great deal of their amusement was found in revels, such as those of Christmas, when the Lord of Misrule and his merry men, fantastically attired, perambulated the streets, and there was feasting and jollity all day. The minstrel, the mountebank, and the juggler were all very popular personages, and each had his peculiar costume. Minstrels sometimes imitated ecclesiastical fashions, and those in

the service of the king wore a livery. The motley garb of the mountebank and juggler, who seem to have performed much the same tricks as they do now, we can easily imagine. Minstrels and jugglers would sometimes get costly garments as presents from the rich people before whom they performed.

Everything contributed in the Middle Ages to produce variety of costume. The peasant, the artisan, and the traders dressed according to their various occupations, and there was not, as there is now, a vast army of sedentary workers, all dressed alike in "suitings," and producing a dull uniformity. One might in the course of an hour meet half a dozen or more distinct varieties of costume—the merchant in his long gown of sober grey or brown, hooded and girdled, and looking the picture of substantial comfort; the carpenter in a blouse of russet blue and flat cap; a gentleman with handsome, fur-lined mantle; a gallant with streaming tippet and sleeves, followed by a serving-man carrying a serviceable cloak; a chamber-wench in coarse gown and smart kerchief, perhaps one cast off by her mistress; a pilgrim with long beard and cross and staff; a Dominican monk in his black robes; and a juggler in pink and blue and yellow, with ribbons, laces, and scarf, wending his way to the palace to distract the royal mind from the cares of State.

CHAPTER V.

Ecclesiastical dress—Extravagance of the clergy—The Sumptuary Laws—Mourning—Love of colour in the Middle Ages—Jewellery.

> "Mayntene thy-silf aftir thi rent
> Of robe and eke of garnement."
>
> *Romaunt of the Rose.*

THE great power of the Church in the Middle Ages, the wealth of the religious houses, the importance of the clergy as landed proprietors, combined to invest the priesthood with a dignity apart from their spiritual office. For a long time they had the monopoly of learning, and after knowledge had become more diffused they were still the only instructors of youth, and dominated all seminaries. They swayed the minds of the people, who looked up to them as possessing authority over their souls, and listened with fear, if not always with reverence, to their counsels and commands. But at a time when the nation was indulging in all sorts of follies, the majority of the clergy swam with, instead of

trying to check the tide of, extravagance. The luxury of the rich brought trouble upon the poor, and pride and avarice on the part of prelates had created all sorts of evils.

> "Quam sit lata scelerum et quam longa tela
> Sub qua latent pectora vitiis anhela,
> Musa vultu lugubri refer et revela,
> Si curas cor spectantis tetigisse querela."

The people were oppressed with taxation for foreign wars; the country was constantly in an unquiet state, owing to domestic revolutions caused by factious nobles and weak kings, and to troubles with the Welsh and Scotch; there was a great deal of lawlessness which needed putting down with a strong hand, and our laws and constitution were only just getting into settled shape. It was not a time for extravagance, but rather for sober, quiet living. An autocratic priesthood, preaching moderation and practising austerity, would have been of great service. But the clergy, for the most part, did neither; they let pass unrebuked the follies of their congregations because they yearned after the same things themselves. They had to be restrained, as we have seen, by special prohibition from wearing the "long-peked shone." Even monks and friars travelled about in fine raiment quite out of keeping with the vow of poverty. Embroidery and

jewels are hardly part of a holy brother's dress, but Chaucer says of the monk who was one of the Canterbury band—

> "I saugh his sleeves purfiled atte hond
> With grys, and that the finest of a lond,
> And for to festne his hood under his chin
> He hadde of gold ywrought a curious pyn:
> A love knotte in the gretter ende ther was."

We have no reason to suppose that this monk was worldly above his fellows, any more than the jolly friar who dressed "like a maister or a pope," or the pardoner who was "al of the Newe get."

But at that time the clergy, if we except some of the stricter sort, shared the extravagances of the laity in other matters besides dress. The superior priests lived with the state and pomp of great nobles. They hunted and feasted with the best. The villein and the ceorl, as they toiled in the dykes or tilled the earth, saw riding by to the chase not only the lord on whose land they were working, but the priest before whom they knelt in the parish church, or to whom they made confession, and the haughty bishop whose train went clattering into their quiet hamlet, eating up the best that the monastery could provide. Of course high dignitaries had their own domains for hunting, and we may be sure that the clerical parks were

well stocked with game. We read of attempts being made to restrain these sporting priests, but not apparently with much success, as the clergy maintained their reputation for being good sportsmen all through the Middle Ages. Their extravagant display of wealth had to be dealt with by law. Whenever a bishop took a journey, his horses and his servants came pouring into the villages and swooping down upon the monasteries, where they received free entertainment, like an invading army. One archbishop, in the year 1321, is said to have travelled with a train of two hundred persons, all of whom the inmates of the various religious houses on the way fed and lodged.* More than a hundred years previously an order was issued restricting bishops to fifty or sixty horses,† though whether they obeyed this decree history does not record.

Restrained to some degree from adopting the most extravagant fashions of the laity, the clergy gave rein to their love of luxury by making their vestments as splendid as possible. Their robes were embroidered with figures and flowers and lined with expensive furs. On grand occasions prelates wore jewelled mitres and also jewelled gloves like the nobles. Gloves were a striking

* Hallam, *Middle Ages.* † *Ibid.*

feature of ecclesiastical dress. They were supposed to be worn only by bishops, though monks used common sheepskin gloves, worth perhaps three halfpence or twopence of the money of the period. The gloves of prelates were often so valuable as to be left as legacies. A Bishop of London who died in 1303 had a pair of gloves worked with gold and enamelled, valued at £5, and gloves are mentioned among rich presents bequeathed by Bishop Snell in 1416.* Among the sumptuary laws was one forbidding coloured gloves to the clergy, and an enactment of the thirteenth century advises "persons devoted to God" to have "neither ring, nor brooch, nor ornamented girdle, nor gloves." †

The girdles worn by the clergy were frequently of silver, and priests even carried, contrary to regulation, ornamental daggers and swords. They rivalled the laity in the brilliance of their attire :—

"No common knyght may go so gaye,
Chaunge of clothyng every daye."

English embroidery has always been celebrated, and it was to England that Innocent IV. sent, in the reign of Henry III., for a number of embroidered vestments adorned with precious stones,

* Beck, *History of Gloves*.

† *Ancren Riwle* (Camden Society).

for the clergy in Rome. England was a fruitful land for the popes, both then and for many succeeding years.

We do not read of extravagance of dress among the abbesses and nuns, although no doubt they were not all immaculate in this respect. Various were the enactments put forth to keep clerical costume within bounds. Henry III. threatened the clergy with loss of benefice if they did not conform to the prescribed pattern of dress, not only for their own bodies, but also for those of their horses, for trappings were largely used in those days. Edward III. laid down rules as to the wearing of fur and jewels, but the clergy often found means to evade these restrictions, and their luxuriousness forms the subject of many a satire by the writers of the day.

It was not chiefly against the clergy, however, that the sumptuary laws were directed. They were enacted to curb the extravagance of all classes, and to prevent those with small incomes from ruining themselves by imitating the expensive fashions of the rich. There was doubtless, too, among the upper classes the same dislike of seeing the commonalty adopt costumes similar to their own which prompted the promulgation of sumptuary laws in France, where the nobility were very

jealous of their marks of rank. The servants of great lords tried to copy their masters, the merchant desired to dress like the knight, the humble tradesman like the rich burgess. Distinctions between the classes became thus obliterated.

Strutt gives a detailed account of the reforms initiated by the Parliament of Edward III. at the instance of the Commons. Very minute are the directions as to the cost of the costume to be worn by persons of different degrees, according to their incomes, and it is not surprising that such inquisitorial interference, salutary though it might be, was resented and resisted. The amount of a man's wealth was to be proclaimed to all the world by the clothes he wore on his back. "All esquires, and every gentleman under the estate of knighthood, and not possessed of lands or tenements to the yearly amount of two hundred marks, shall use in their dress such cloth as does not exceed the value of four marks and a half the whole cloth; they shall not wear any cloth of gold, of silk or of silver, nor any sort of embroidered garment, nor any ring, buckle, nouche, riband nor girdle, nor any other part of their apparel, gilt, or of silver; nor any ornaments of precious stones, nor furs of any kind; their wives and children shall be subject to the same regulations." Considering

the general use of ornaments, this seems rather a severe enactment for the families of "esquires and gentlemen;" but even knights who possessed a yearly rental of two hundred marks were not allowed either to wear "any kind of precious stones unless it be upon their heads," or any ermine or miniver. "Tradesmen, artificers, and men in office called yeomen shall wear no cloth in their apparel exceeding the price of forty shillings the whole cloth; neither shall they embellish their garments with precious stones, cloth of silk or of silver; nor shall they wear any gold or silver upon their girdles, knives, rings, garters, nouches, ribands, chains, bracelets, or seals; nor any manner of apparel embroidered or decorated with silk or any other way; their wives and children shall wear the same kind of cloth as they do, and use no veils but such as are made with thread and manufactured in this kingdom; nor any kind of furs excepting those of lambs, of rabbits, of cats, and of foxes."

The labouring folk were prohibited from wearing any material above a certain price, fixed in accordance with their supposed means; and the coarse, home-made stuffs intended for their use were relieved of duty so as to bring the price down to the needs of the poor. Ermine, miniver, and sable were, of course, always costly, and reserved for

princes and nobles; but the fox, which we think rather highly of now, was abundant and comparatively cheap, while the fur of the domestic cat was commonly used. Yeomen were prohibited from wearing any fur but that of foxes, conies, and otters.

There were also statutes against the garments cut into odd shapes and devices, and forfeiture of the article was the punishment for disobedience. Similar laws were enacted at a later era, as we shall see. There was at that period nothing unusual in the promulgation of sumptuary laws. They were passed both in France and Italy. Indeed, extravagance reached such a pitch in France in the fourteenth century that Pope Urban IV. resorted to the extremity of excommunicating those who persisted in their follies. Even in mourning garments it was necessary to curb the love of display. Mourning was not worn to any extent before the reign of Edward III., and those who put on sable attire consoled themselves by having enormous quantities of stuff in their gowns and mantles. Black was the usual colour for the mourning habit, though brown appears also to have been used. In France ladies of rank wore white, and kings and princes generally enjoyed a royal licence as to colour. Sometimes black mourning

tunics would be bordered with yellow, and the wide black mantles lined with ermine or some other white fur. The idea of putting on plain, coarse attire as a sign of mourning did not commend itself to our ancestors in the Middle Ages any more than to men and women of the present day.

In one point our forefathers were superior to us. For mourning they clothed themselves simply in dark garments—black or brown, as the case might be; they did not pretend to express their grief in so many inches of crape trimming. That particular luxury of woe not being invented, they contented themselves with doffing bright colours in favour of sombre ones. In those times bright colours were more esteemed than they are now. A staid London citizen or merchant might habit himself in sober shades, but most people who could afford to dress as they liked wore blue and green, yellow and red, and often all four at a time. One seldom meets with such a thing as a complete costume carried out in one colour among persons of distinction. The English shared with Southern nations in the taste for gaiety, and flaunted their bright dress under the soft grey skies as if defying the climate. The nobility and gentry were dressed chiefly in imported goods—in the scarlets of Ghent, the blues of Provence, the purples of the East. Those clear,

brilliant dyes, so different from the homespun russets and friezes, and too expensive for the commonalty, were naturally prized as the monopoly of the wealthy, and certain colours came to be regarded as emblems of dignity and state, such as the knightly scarlet and the royal purple.

Among princes and nobles and the richer classes there was great partiality for stuffs woven with gold and silver thread, which shone like the precious metals themselves. We often read of cloth of gold garments being used on festive occasions and sent as presents among royal personages. It was the custom in the reign of Henry II. for great nobles to present themselves at court in gold raiment at Whitsuntide. Cloth of gold is a material of which we have lost sight, like samite and one or two more. Among the old regalia transferred by Henry VIII. from the nation's keeping to his own, and which are thought to date back to the eleventh century, are mentioned buskins made of cloth of silver, and shoes of cloth of gold.*

We see a great many jewels worn in the Middle Ages, but the manner of wearing them is very different from that of later times. Large numbers of precious stones were sewn on to the dresses

* Beck, *History of Gloves.*

themselves, were used lavishly as embroidery on gowns, mantles, surcoats, shoes, hats, caps, gloves, and girdles, in a manner resembling Eastern profusion. Queens wore coronets of jewels; and garlands of emeralds, sapphires, and pearls were bought for Eleanor of Provence, wife of Henry III. But the chief ornaments worn separately were necklaces and brooches. The common fashion of cutting the neck of the gown rather low at the throat prepared the way for the necklace, which often consisted of several rows of coloured stones or two or three gold circles; and the equally general adoption of sleeves coming down to the wrist left no room for the bracelet.

The same thing applies to the use of earrings. While the wimple and the various kinds of stiff head-dresses covering the ears were worn, earrings were not thought of; and it was not until the whole fashion of wearing the hair and adorning the head had changed that we see these ornaments coming into use. Rings were worn by both ladies and gentlemen, and were among the ornaments forbidden to certain classes by the sumptuary laws; but few illuminations show rings on the fingers of either sex. Gentlemen were fond of having girdles studded with gems, fastening jewels in their hats, clasping their mantles with magnificent brooches;

and nobles would occasionally wear necklaces of gold with large pendants like the big lockets worn now by civic dignitaries with robes of state. English goldsmiths were always famous for their work, and the markets of the East being opened up during the Crusades, chased gold and silver and jewels were to be had in abundance by those who could pay for them. Precious stones were frequently brought back by pilgrims, and used to embellish ecclesiastical plate and to adorn celebrated shrines. Henry III. spent large sums in procuring camei for the tomb of Edward the Confessor.

CHAPTER VI.

MARTS AND MERCHANDISE.

Underclothing—The linen trade—The wool trade—Liveries and livery companies—Some costly fabrics.

It is rather difficult to decide as to the nature and material of underclothing. That portion of attire was in an undeveloped state, and remained so for centuries. Indeed, it is only within quite recent times that we have grasped the idea of clothing the body equally all over, and even now we carry out that tardily acquired notion but imperfectly. There was more excuse for our mediæval ancestors, who had such rude substitutes for our needles and threads, pins, hooks and eyes, and tapes, and all the paraphernalia required for producing a garment. How they ever put together the external attire with such appliances as then existed is a marvel, and it is not at all wonderful that they should have reduced their undergarments to one or two pieces, and those of the simplest description. They did

not suffer from that sensitiveness to changes of temperature which afflicts men and women of the present day, and has so complicated our clothing. The chemise and the shirt seem to have been always in vogue, but what else was worn is uncertain. The chemise, M. Quicherat tells us, comes direct from antiquity, while MM. Lacroix and Séré consider it was unknown to the ancients, but may be traced back as far as the fourth century to the garment known as the "camicia." However, there is no doubt that articles corresponding to the chemise and the shirt were worn by the English as soon as they wore clothing of any sort, though what they were made of is not so apparent.

The Saxons, as we have seen, manufactured linen and wore it next the skin, it being deemed a penance to wear a woollen shirt. In Scotland, too, linen was in common use in early times for the mutch, or kerchief, which married women wore. As a great number of Flemish weavers came over with the Normans, we should expect to find the linen trade of increasing importance. But although flax is indigenous to England there was very little of it grown in the country, even at the time of the Conquest;* and the manufacture of linen must have fallen off, for we hear no more of

* Alexander Warden, *History of the Linen Trade.*

English linen until the reign of Henry III., who ordered large quantities from Wiltshire and Sussex, where manufactories had been recently established. The linen shirts, which some writers assert were worn extensively in the beginning of the thirteenth century by the commonalty as well as the nobility, must have been supplied by the looms of Flanders and of France. The Flemish have always been noted for their skill in weaving both linen and cloth. So great was their repute in the fourteenth century, that Edward III. invited a number of linen and woollen weavers to come over and settle in England, with a view of stimulating trade. The king himself became a member of the company of linen armourers, as did his successor, Richard II.

Linen was made in Ireland as early as the eleventh century, but not in large quantities, and the troubles with Ireland in the reign of Henry II. put a stop to any trade with that country. In the fourteenth century the manufacture was established in Wales. Still, most of the fine linen was imported from France, Italy, and Flanders, all sorts of facilities being granted to foreign merchants. Even the coarse linen made in the home looms had a foreign rival in a stout fabric called "dowlas," imported from Brittany and used

by the humbler folk for wearing apparel. Our foreign trade was extensive enough to supply the wealthy with as much fine linen as they wanted; but they seem to have used it more largely for tablecloths and sheets than for underclothing. Anderson, in his *History of Commerce*, quoting from Echard, says that fine table-linen was commonly seen in private houses in 1348, when the English were glorying in French spoils. But wool was more generally used for garments up to the time of the Tudors,* and even then the royal washing-bills were so small that linen could not have been very largely worn for underwear.

What washing cost the Plantagenet kings would be an interesting inquiry, if the sums could be exactly ascertained. The laundry is so specifically mentioned and dwelt upon in the *Wardrobe Ordinances* of Edward II. that it seems as if there were a fair amount of linen used for the king's person as well as for household purposes. There was a "lawendere for the kinges chambre who shal wash al manner of linnen cloth for the kinges person, and al the office of the Eawyre as wel them that are towardes the hal as them that are towardes the chambre, and the coveringes of the offices appertaining to the chambre. And a

* Alexander Warden, *History of the Linen Trade.*

lawendere of the Naperie who shal wash al manner of linnen cloth appertaining to the office of the Naperie and the coveringes of the offices that pertaine to the hal." *

Hudson Turner states that linen was abundant among the middle and lower classes in the thirteenth century. If so, it was no doubt the cheap, coarse kind made at home, and that exchanged with the Bretons for wool. Linen sheets, the same writer says, were used by the middle class. It does not follow, however, that they wore linen shirts and chemises because they used linen sheets and tablecloths. A people who were accustomed to wear night-caps but no night-gowns cannot be counted upon to show any sort of consistency in their habits.

The great development of the wool trade in mediæval times had a considerable influence on dress. English wool was always highly prized by foreign manufacturers, and our export trade was very large. But here, again, we needed the Flemish to teach us how to weave the raw material to the best advantage. The Dutch had a very poor opinion of English sagacity, for they boasted they could buy a fox-skin of an Englishman for fourpence,

* *King Edward II.'s Household and Wardrobe Ordinances* (Chaucer Society).

and sell him the tail for twelvepence. Most of our cloths used for garments were imported under the earlier Plantagenets, and when Henry III. ordered the Mayor of Oxford to buy five hundred ells of russet cloth and one hundred pair of hose for the poor, it was not from any English looms that the material was provided, but from Brunswick.* We fed the foreign weavers. Duties were paid to the king on all exported wool, and these duties brought in quite a revenue to Edward I., the heaviness of the impost arousing some complaint: "Non est lex sana, quod regi sit mea lana." England traded a good deal with the Lombards as well as the Flemish, and in the following reign we hear of commerce with the Venetians and Spaniards in wool, and of a wish expressed by Louis X. that a staple for English wool should be set up in France. And we also hear for the first time of looms being set up in Bristol, and of worsteds being made in Norwich.

It was Edward III., however, who gave the great impetus to the cloth manufacture, by inviting Flemings to come and settle here; and although the presence of the Flemish weavers was at first resented by the English, the advantages to be reaped from their skill and knowledge were

* Anderson, *History of Commerce.*

soon perceived. Fortunately for us, too, disturbances arose at Louvain and other places which caused numbers of weavers to take refuge in England. Wool staples were set up in various cities, and Devon and Cornwall laid the foundations of those manufactures for which they have ever since been celebrated. A good deal of the cloth used by the working classes for apparel began to be made in the West of England, while Suffolk and Essex supplied the kind known as kerseys.* What were called single and double worsteds were made as well as plain cloth, double worsted being evidently a very superior material; for Chaucer, describing the sumptuousness of the Friar's dress, says—

"Of double worstede was his semy-cope."

The cloth trade was developing fast, and the fact that in the reign of Richard II. the Pope sent over for large quantities of woollen goods, bed furniture, and wearing apparel,† shows that the manufactures were thriving. There were then eight export towns—Weymouth and Southampton in the south; Norwich, Lynn, and Yarmouth in the east; and Newcastle, Hull, and Boston in the north. Although jewels, silk, and other costly fabrics

* Strutt, *Dress and Habits of the People of England.*

† Anderson, *History of Commerce.*

were largely imported, the exports were much greater—wool, leather, tin, and lead yielding the bulk of the profit. Gloves, too, are mentioned among the exports. We read of a curious custom which shows that the process of manufacturing woollen cloth was very different from what it is now. After a garment had been in wear some time it was usual to send it to be reshorn, as the cloth when new had a very long nap.* This process would be repeated two or three times, giving the garment quite a fresh look. The cloth must have been of a substantial make to stand this shearing.

It was at this period that the great Livery Companies arose. They had their origin in the ancient Craft Guilds, which, as they increased in importance, had their ordinances duly enrolled, and adopted certain costumes which gave them the name of Livery Companies.† In the reign of Edward III. the Drapers' and the Merchant Tailors' Companies received their charters of incorporation. The latter Company made all kinds of wearing apparel in their early days, woollen and linen goods, and the padding for armour. The Mercers' Company, who were incorporated under Richard II., dealt at first

* *Manners and Household Expenses in England in the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Roxburgh Club Publications).

† *English Guilds* (Early English Text Society).

in haberdashery; then they abandoned the smaller goods for woollen cloth: but they sold no silk up to the middle of the fourteenth century; and, indeed, it is not till the first quarter of the fifteenth century that we find them becoming large dealers in the material with which their name is associated. The costume or livery adopted by the various companies—for there were many others, the Grocers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Salters, Skinners, and Glovers all being incorporated under the Plantagenet kings—was not fixed for some time. The Leathersellers in the reign of Richard II. followed the fashion of the day, and wore a parti-coloured livery, their colours being red and blue.*

The usual colours for liveries were red and green, mixed with what was called "rayes," a striped cloth. The Grocers for daily wear had a coat and surcoat, and, for ceremonial occasions, a gown and hood, their colours being first scarlet and green. Liveries were not worn at all before the time of Edward I., and on account of the abuses which grew up from wearing these costumes, the Companies were compelled to obtain a royal licence before they could adopt liveries. All sorts of people took to wearing badges and liveries. Nobles were not content with putting their imme-

* Herbert, *History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies.*

diate servants and dependants in their colours, but granted the privilege of wearing the livery to tradesmen and other outsiders, for the sake of securing their support in the event of quarrels and disturbances. People of lesser rank imitated the nobles, receiving payment for the liveries which they granted. Feuds were liable to be fomented by these irregular formations of bands of followers, and edicts were issued against giving liveries. But the custom died a hard death; both sides liked the mutual protection and distinction, and the prohibition had to be renewed again and again. Of course the officers of the royal household wore liveries, and we read in the *Wardrobe Ordinances* of Edward III. that his squires had twenty shillings each, twice a year, summer and winter, for their robes, and four shillings and eightpence a year for shoes.

Passing from the useful to the ornamental, from the serviceable woollen cloths to the fine and costly stuffs used so largely by the wealthy, we see how much England was indebted to foreign markets. Egypt and Syria furnished silks; Italy and Sicily gold and silver cloth and figured silken textiles. The buckeram, used in vestments and for purposes of dress, took its name from Bokhara, as the rich baudequin from Bagdad, and cloth of Acca from Acre. The only thing in which we could compete

with other nations was embroidery. Up to the fifteenth century English embroidery was justly esteemed, and "Opus Anglicum" was known all over Europe. Edward II. paid one hundred marks to the wife of a London citizen for embroidering a choir cope.* The deftness of Englishwomen in this branch of work was very remarkable, and ecclesiastical costume, above all, profited by their skill.

Among other kinds of work with which women busied themselves was the weaving of narrow silken strips to bind the arm after bleeding. In an age when bleeding was the remedy for all disorders, and was resorted to as a preventive as well as a cure, it was necessary to have some convenient form of bandage always ready. These silk strips, called "blodbendes," were evidently given as presents, for in the *Regulæ Inclusarum* the nuns are forbidden to make "blodbendes of silk" to please their friends, but are told to keep to the making and mending of church vestments and clothes for the poor.

A fashion was introduced of working figures into vestments, and of using silk coloured differently on the two sides, also of working subjects on linen for altar cloths and cushions. Everything used in the service of the Church was elaborate and costly,

* Very Rev. D. Rock, *Textile Fabrics.*

from the jewelled mitre on the head of the bishop to the embroidered cushion on which knelt the humble priest.

The beautiful samite, which was such a favourite material, was a thick, silky substance, woven of six threads (ἑξ μίτοι—*exsamit*), with a streak of gold running through it. All our kings in the Middle Ages used great quantities of samite, and Edward I. had so much that the nobles were allowed to buy it out of the royal wardrobe.* It was also used for vestments. Siclaton was a much thinner, lighter kind of silk, used for surcoats on festal occasions, and cendal and taffeta were both silky substances of a less costly sort. Sarcenet, too, we find mention of; but satin belongs to a little later period. Baudequin was a variation of cloth of gold, and must have been a substantial material, as it was used not only for dresses and vestments, but also for palls to throw over coffins at State funerals, and for the canopy of thrones—hence the origin of the word "baldachino."† Italy was then in advance of France in the manufacture of the finer and more costly fabrics; and we do not hear of French silks and velvets until after Lucca, Genoa, Florence, and Milan had won their reputation for these materials.

* Very Rev. D. Rock, *Textile Fabrics.* † Ibid.

In the middle of the fourteenth century, when our home trade and foreign commerce were fast developing, we were carrying havoc into France, who, in return, conquered us, not by her arts, but by her follies; for we speedily copied all the fashionable freaks in which the French, then at the apex of their extravagance, indulged. An old French chronicler, writing of the disasters which befell his country, says, "Et pour . . . ce ne fut pas merveille si Dieu voulut corriger les excès des François par son fléau, le roi d'Angleterre."

THE REIGN OF THE ROSES.

1399–1485.

CHAPTER VII.

Armour: its splendour and its changes—Religious and military Orders—Review of the Plantagenet Period.

"All furnish'd, all in arms,
All plum'd like estridges that wing the wind."
1 *Henry IV.*, act iv. sc. 1.

So essentially was the Plantagenet a fighting Period, that armour would claim a first place in our consideration had not its influence on costume completely passed away. Whereas in civilian dress we retain the names though not the shapes of the garments of the Middle Ages, and every now and then a turn of Fashion's wheel recalls some long-forgotten mode—as the recent revival of the hanging sleeves, for instance—there is nothing to remind us of the shining suits of armour and splendid jewelled weapons in which the knights and gentlemen of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries went forth to fight and joust. Every trace of the military habit has been lost. Instead of swords are carried showy walking-sticks, whose main purpose seems to

be to trip up unoffending persons. Our only weapon of defence when going on a journey is the umbrella. And if civilians no longer go armed as did their forefathers, neither do our soldiers go forth to fight weighted almost beyond endurance. The massive armour which was proof against arrows would be riddled by discharges from the repeating rifle. Gunpowder has blown up all the plates and rivets and chains, and left a chasm between us and our trusty archers and pikemen. It is true that gunpowder was known in the fourteenth century; but if we except some clumsy artillery, which was occasionally brought into play, we may regard mediæval warfare as almost unaffected by this deadly discovery. The effigies of English knights of the Middle Ages seem like the monuments of some other nation. Nor has Chaucer's yeoman in his "coote and hood of green," with his "shef of pocok arwes bright and kene," any more likeness to the gallant defenders of our country to-day. In nothing have the times changed more than in the manner of warfare. If the love of fighting which animated Europe in the Middle Ages were as potent now, and if wars occurred with the same frequency, we should, with our deadlier and swifter means of destruction, soon bring about general ruin.

Of course it is to the Holy Wars we must look for the origin of most of the changes introduced into armour under the Plantagenets. It was when fighting under the hot Eastern skies that men began to realize the full weight of that terrible mail armour with which they were wont to equip themselves. Richard I. went to the Crusades clad in a complete coat of mail, reaching nearly to the knees; his legs and feet were encased in mail, and he was further protected by a ponderous shield emblazoned with the royal arms.

This was the usual armour of a knight in those days. The sun beat down with tremendous force on this glittering mass of mail; and partly as a veil from the heat, and partly to enable the various leaders to be more easily distinguished on the battle-field, there came into vogue the surcoat, emblazoned with heraldic bearings, and worn over the coat of mail. The surcoat was of some light material, often of silk. But that did not lessen the weight of the armour though it diminished its heat. So, instead of encasing the whole frame in one solid mass of steel, the English knights began to copy the ways of some of the strangers they encountered, and to put plates of metal on their elbows and knees, *pour point* or gamboised coverings on the thighs, and so on, protecting the

parts most liable to injury. They had steel gloves, too, with separate fingers. Padded armour, made of cloth or leather, was also worn in the thirteenth century, in the form of quilted tunics wadded with wool, which were called by the name of "wambeys." Sometimes these tunics took the place of the hauberk, and sometimes they were worn under the hauberk, which was apt to press on the chest and had to be kept off by a *plastron-de-fer*, or steel plate.

With the padded armour it was unnecessary to carry such long shields, and they became shorter and flatter. The shield was emblazoned with the arms of the owner, and so were the *ailettes* or shoulder-pieces introduced in the reign of Edward I. These were worn, too, by the French, who quite revolutionized their armour about the same period. The helmet went up and down, now towering above the head in sugar-loaf form, and now falling to a mere steel cap, while the neck was wrapped in a high reticulated gorget of steel. The surcoat was succeeded by the *jupon*—a close, sleeveless tunic girdled below the waist, and completely covered with heraldic bearings or embroidery.

An English bowman of the thirteenth century was a picturesque figure in his coloured hose and shoes, short tunic of mail, and small surcoat with a

sheaf of arrows thrust into the girdle, and his trusty bow in his left hand. Although his head was covered with a helmet, his neck was exposed to the arrows of the foe, the collar of his tunic being cut as low as our sailors' blouses. But a yeoman of yore would have felt sorely cumbered in the closely fitting collar of the modern soldier.

As civil costume became more luxurious, armour increased in magnificence, and reached the height of its splendour in the reign of Edward III., when the knight, with his rich *jupon*, his costly girdle, jewelled sword, and golden spurs, rivalled the noble in his cloth of gold and ermine. It was in the same reign that the Order of the Garter was instituted—a secular Order of Chivalry, under the patronage of St. George.

Various religious Orders were founded in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the chief being the Dominicans and Franciscans, or the Black and the Grey Friars, whose striking, if sombre, costumes lent another element to the kaleidoscopic dress of the period. There were the Carmelites, too, who were, says Planché, very popular when they first came into Europe, with their picturesque brown and white burnouses. But in 1286 the Pope compelled them to exchange their traditional costume for grey gowns and white mantles, because the

burnouses excited unseemly remarks and jests.* Whether the nuns of the Carmelite Order were also obliged to cast aside their ancient dress is not related, but they are depicted in long brown gowns and white mantles with brown hoods and white wimples. As nuns were not so often seen in the world, there would be less occasion to interfere with them. Many other Orders arose, which were all suppressed, except the Carmelites and Augustines.

But the most notable Order in this age of mingled religious zeal, chivalry, and ferocity, was that of the Knight Templars, whose foundation has been already noted. All through the Crusades the majestic figure of the Templar, in his flowing white mantle, with the red cross blazing in front, looms before us in the crowd of combatants. With his long beard the Templar resembled a pilgrim; with his tunic of mail, a knight; with his white mantle and cross, a priest. By the vows of his Order he was bound to abstain from luxurious living and costly apparel. All unnecessary articles, such as silk sashes and velvet trappings for the horses, were forbidden. He might not even wear a helmet emblazoned with his armorial bearings, like other knights, but must content himself with a simple hood of mail over a linen coif. In the house he

* Planché, *Cyclopædia of Costume.*

might not use any gold or silver or valuable furniture. Gradually, however, the Templar forgot his noble ideal of purity and piety, and fell from his high estate into decay and corruption.

As we come to the last years of the Plantagenet Period, we begin to see some of the results of those momentous events with which it was charged. While at the beginning the English were, commercially speaking, no nation, at its close they were fast becoming one of the chief trading peoples of Christendom. The Crusades, which swallowed up so many lives and so much treasure, not only opened up new markets, but expanded the moral and mental horizon. The spirit of chivalry fostered the spirit of charity, and while men fought for the weak and oppressed they remembered the sick and suffering. From the time when our English king, Henry II., founded the houses for lepers at Rouen and Rouvrais, in the twelfth century, we may date the germs of that system of benevolent enterprise for which in later ages England has become so famous. The Plantagenet Period gave birth also to those literary stirrings which found their full expression in the genius of Chaucer. It was the dawn of the Renaissance, whose light we shall see steadily broadening and brightening. And the social life of the nation underwent change too;

fresh customs and manners were formed, and the great middle-class—the backbone of England—was becoming a power and pressing upwards. Fashions which would once have only concerned the nobility now began to affect the burghers. In the constantly changing attire, the varying shapes and materials, the multiplied luxuries, we can see the traces of events of lasting importance.

CHAPTER I.

Decline of the feudal system—Break-up of the great baronial houses—Lessened power of Parliament and greater independence of the Crown—Increased influence and importance of the middle class—Spread of knowledge and education through the printing-press.

"Between the Red Rose and the White."
Henry VI., pt. i. act ii. sc. 4.

In the disquiet which prevailed at home, and the excitement of victorious warfare in France, great changes were passing unheeded over the face of English society. If the long reign of the Plantagenets teemed with new births, the Reign of the Roses—a period under ninety years—saw uprootings as memorable as any in our history. The great fabric of the feudal system, which for more than four centuries had resisted all pressure, fell almost beneath one blow. And it was from within that the stroke came. It was not a revolt of the masses or a sudden despotic exercise of royal authority that shattered this mighty engine of power, although

trading class was steadily growing in numbers and importance. Merchants and artisans, and men of peace generally, looked with disgust and alarm at the lawless aristocrat who shed blood and extorted money like a marauding pasha. They turned to the king, and the king saw that the safety of his throne lay in the protection of his people's interests. King and people united to build up a new system of government which should be independent of the control of the barons.

But a greater change than the fall of the baronage had been brought about by the Wars of the Roses. Truly it was a time of undoing. With the shattering of the feudal system came the decay of the rights and privileges of Parliament, and the beginning of an era of despotism. Not the greatest of the Plantagenet sovereigns was so independent of control as the "Merchant King," Edward IV. Never had the Crown possessed such wealth as fell to its share after the Civil Wars. Fines and confiscations swelled the royal treasury; there were no costly foreign expeditions to be paid for; no grants were needed, and a king who was not in want of money was practically free to do as he pleased. Parliament was rarely and irregularly called, and the king usurped more and more of its ancient rights. It was fortunate for the nation that

it should at last have on the throne a ruler who loved peace as much as his predecessors had loved war, but the peace was bought at the price of constitutional liberty. If the Yorkists and their successors had thirsted for foreign conquests instead of for gold, the course of Parliamentary history would have been greatly altered. Wars would have necessitated the calling of Parliaments, and the redressing of grievances in exchange for grants. But the Crusades were long since at an end, the weary contest with France was over, and for a time there was little to divert our kings from the maintenance of order and the developing of commerce within the sister kingdoms.

The day of the merchant and tradesman had come. What Edward III. had begun, Edward IV. completed. In the stormy interval between the magnificent Plantagenet and the calculating Yorkist, the burgesses had been silently strengthening their position, and adding to their ranks. By the middle of the fifteenth century, manufacturers were becoming capitalists. Leading traders were employed on foreign embassies, and consulted in affairs of State; and leading commercial cities had their merchant princes, who spent munificently. The various trade companies were spreading in all parts of the country. The king himself sent ships laden with

tin, wool, and cloth to the ports of Southern Europe. The development of the larger trades differentiated the industries of the country, and the distribution of wealth and property helped to create a class of small traders. So greatly did the number of artificers increase that husbandry was neglected.

Lastly, it was the era of the printing-press. On all sides men were eager for knowledge, eager for inquiry into things which their forefathers had not questioned. The appetite for learning, which the scarcity of manuscripts made it so hard to satisfy, evoked the spirit of invention, and Caxton's types, rude as they were, unlocked the doors of knowledge to the multitude. The Church was henceforth rivalled as a teacher, and monks and priests were no longer the monopolists of learning. A new England was awakening to fight its way to intellectual light through the mists of obstruction, dogmatism, and persecution.

CHAPTER II.

Similarity of English and French dress—Tendency of dress to shorten—Introduction of the doublet and stomacher—Varieties in shoes: the "poulaines" superseded by the "duckbills"—Women's dress: disappearance of the train.

"What am I, sir? nay, what are you, sir?—O immortal gods! O fine villain! A silken doublet! a velvet hose! a scarlet cloak! and a copatain hat!"—*Taming of the Shrew*, act v. sc. 1.

THE French, in spite of the convulsions that rent their country, continued to worship at Fashion's shrine. It was not, however, Paris that always led the way. For some time the Court of the King of France was quite eclipsed by the Court of the Count of Flanders, Philip of Burgundy; Ghent and Bruges dictated modes, and were centres of novelty. A notable leader of fashion was the Duke of Orleans, who spent amazing sums on his toilet at a time when the country was writhing under the scourge of the English armies. Gold and jewels were used in lavish quantities to ornament the costumes of French gallants, and invention was

busy with new devices, each more costly than the last, to satisfy the passion for change and display. A fantastic splendour marked the dress of the nobles, who seemed to find the human body a very inadequate medium for the display of their gorgeous tastes.

We have only to study our neighbours and foes across the Channel to see what sort of appearance we presented ourselves at this period, for the extravagant fashions adopted in England were borrowed from France. Unlike as were the habits and temperament of the two nations, there was little in the outer man to distinguish the Englishman from the Frenchman, and the higher we ascend in the social scale the more striking is the similarity. No doubt the way of wearing the clothes differed then as now, but pictures do not convey to us movement and gesture and the many indescribable trifles which mark differences of character.

The first portion of the Lancastrian era does not show any essential changes in dress. The second and most notable of the three kings, Henry V., was a fighting monarch who gave little time to civil matters, and had a soldier's indifference to fashion. He showed a marked disregard to the whole subject of attire, though as Prince of Wales

his conduct in this, as in other respects, was very different. To Henry V. when Heir Apparent the poet Occleve addressed a number of verses animadverting on the extravagant dress of the period, the "gownes of scarlet"—

> "Twelve yerdes wide with pendaunt sleves doune
> On the grounde, and the furre therein set,
> Amountyng unto twenty pound and bet."

But when Henry Prince of Wales became king, he incurred reproaches of an opposite character. One old chronicler says of the king's jewels and clothes that they were such "as the worst pages of the least nobleman in these days would scorn to wear." In the royal wardrobe were found "plain gownes less value than forty shillings." A petticoat of red damask is even put down at ten shillings. It seems strange to find such an article of attire as a petticoat among a king's garments, but the term in this case denoted a kind of gown with open sleeves. Strutt complains that the men's dress was too much like the women's, with their doublets laced in front across the stomacher, their open gowns and petticoats. Costume was in confusion: long gowns and short gowns, tunics and doublets, hoods and hats, made a jumble of styles, which had, however, one feature in common—they were all showy. No civil strifes, no decimating

foreign campaigns were able to quench the love of finery, to check the pomp of the nobles, or keep the middle classes from emulating their example, as the sumptuary laws clearly show. The barons might wage exterminating wars, but they clung to their gold tissue and embroideries. English soldiers might be fighting abroad, but the merchants and craftsmen at home went on steadily piling up wealth, and the wives and daughters of burgesses decked themselves as nearly as they could like the Court ladies.

The characteristic feature of dress at this period was a tendency to shorten. All through the Plantagenet era the influence of the classic age can be traced in the long gowns, the hanging sleeves, and the toga-like mantles, clasped sometimes over the shoulder and sometimes in front. But towards the middle of the fifteenth century a different form begins to make its appearance. There are fewer draperies and graceful folds. The long gown is cut down to a short doublet, and the sweeping, fur-lined robes and mantles are only brought out on State occasions. Of course the change did not come all at once, and the fashion of the long garments did not completely die out during the century. But it was the dawn of the modern period. The antique was steadily giving way. It had suffered many corruptions, had been twisted

and tortured from its original grace into a thing full of distortion, and now it was to disappear from view. Its power was gone.

With the advent of the doublet came other fashions. The doublet itself was a short jacket, pleated a few inches below the waist, which was defined by a girdle. The sleeves, instead of hanging in points to the ground, were simply full to the wrist and slashed all the way down, showing the white under-sleeve of the shirt. The shoulders were padded to give breadth and fulness. In fact, clothing, instead of being equally distributed over the body, was heaped about the upper part. The doublet was sometimes slashed or laced across for ornament, and sometimes cut open in front to show a sort of stomacher beneath. This was occasionally of the same material as the doublet. In the *Coronation Accounts of Richard III.* we read: "For the use of Lord Edward, son of Edward IV., a doublet and stomacher of black satin." The stomacher, which we are accustomed to regard as an article of purely female attire, was worn by both sexes at its introduction in the fifteenth century, half a yard of material being usually quoted as the amount allowed for it in the wardrobe ordinances of kings and nobles. It was frequently embroidered and studded with jewels. Sometimes it was

made of linen; Edward IV. certainly wore linen stomachers.

The long hose were still worn, and were fastened by points or latchets to the doublet. Sir W. Scott gives a German mercenary a prodigious number of points to his hose. In *Quentin Durward* there is a *lanzknecht* whose "hose were much slashed, through which slashes was drawn silk or tiffany, of various colours; they were tied by at least five hundred points or strings, made of ribbon, to the tight buff jacket which he wore." Obviously these points were not fastenings but ornaments. For a time the pointed shoes continued in favour, princes wearing points two feet long, and lesser persons one foot. Then the fashion changed, and what were called "duckbills" came into use. Length gave place to breadth, and the gallants affected ridiculously broad shoes, which excited as much comment and censure as the "poulaines."

There was a variety of foot-covering during the Reign of the Roses. The soldier-king, Henry V., liked short boots, as more consonant with the military habit and active movements. In the time of Henry VI. a very high boot, coming well up to the middle of the thigh and turned over with straps, was introduced. Clogs were also worn, fastened over the instep. All sorts of shapes and styles prevailed—

pointed, broad, high and low. Leather was used as material, and both boots and shoes were double-soled. In the *Wardrobe Ordinances* of Edward IV. "a pair of shoon, double soled, of blac leder, not lined" is specified; also another pair, of Spanish leather, which is put down at three times the cost. There is frequent mention of slippers, which looks as if our ancestors were beginning to appreciate ease and comfort in their apparel.

Women, meanwhile, had not made much alteration in their costume except in the head-dresses, which will be noticed in another chapter. The long robes, and the gowns with the short spencer-like jackets edged with fur, were still seen. A great deal of unnecessary material was used in the gowns, which must have been outrageously heavy with their immense trains trimmed with fur. The trains grew longer and longer, and the waists shorter. It became the fashion to cut the neck of the gown square, and to turn the collar over with velvet, or more commonly fur, which was very much used for trimming. Sleeves were of various lengths and widths. The trailing sleeves with jagged edges, which had so long been a prominent feature of male costume, were worn by ladies too, but not so extravagantly long as by the men. Sleeves tight from shoulder to wrist, with a velvet or

fur cuff, were in fashion as well; and slashed sleeves, showing the white sleeve of the tunic underneath. Gloves had not yet become part of a gentlewoman's attire, and the long sleeves of the gown were still used to cover the hands when mittens were not worn. It seems odd that gloves were not adopted earlier by ladies. Men in the higher ranks wore them, and priests and State dignitaries. With Edward IV. they seem to have been a regular item of dress, as there is a mention of eight dozen pairs in his *Wardrobe Accounts*. In France, ladies wore gloves of chamois and dogskin, in imitation of the gentlemen whose dress they delighted in copying.

Women's dress was still fashioned in the main on the antique, although the bust was more distinctly outlined than in the classic models. There was a tendency to cut the figure into sections, instead of keeping to the long ungirdled gown, open at the neck, with sleeves falling to the ground, or the graceful girdled gown, high to the throat, with full sleeves. The dividing line was not generally at the waist, but at the hips, to which the spencer or bodice—in form not unlike the modern jacket bodice—just reached. This upper piece was of different colour and material from the gown, and was always richly trimmed and ornamented. Following the fashion of the gentlemen in shortening

their garments, the ladies took to cutting off the trains of their gowns, and bordering the edge very deeply with fur. This was an unconscious step towards the short, hooped petticoat which was to make its appearance at a later period. As yet there was no stiffening of the skirt or disfigurement of the body with whalebone. The gowns were extravagantly sumptuous, but they were tasteful in shape. Fashions were frequently carried to excess, and sharp were the satires on those who wore their gowns extremely *decolletées*, while yards and yards of material swept the ground behind. It is curious to see such an exact prototype of the excesses of modern times. The moralists of the fifteenth century did not spare fashionable dames, but minutely criticized and held up to reprobation all the details of costume. Here is one who wrote—

"And of fyne silk thair furrit cloikis,
With hingeand slevis, lyk geill poikis,*
Na preiching will gar thame foirbeir
To weir all thing that sinne provoikis,
And all for newfangilnes of geir.

"Thair collars, carcats,† and hals beidis ‡
With velvet hats heicht on their heidis,
Coirdit with gold lyik ane younkier,
Brondit about with goldin threidis;
And all for newfangilnes of geir." §

* Jelly bags. † Necklaces. ‡ Throat beads.

§ *Satirical Songs and Poems on Costume*, edited by F. W Fairholt. (Percy Society's Publications.)

CHAPTER III.

An era of head-dresses—The horned, steeple, mitre, and butterfly head-dresses—Caps and turbans—Changes in men's head-gear.

"Cornes ont por tuer les hommes.
D'atrui cheveus portent granz sommes,
Desus lor teste."
Satirical Songs and Poems on Costume, edited by F. W. Fairholt.

THIS was an era of head-dresses. If the ladies did not contrive any startling novelties in the way of gowns, they cannot be accused of lack of invention with regard to the adornment of their heads. It had long been the fashion, as we have seen, to cover up the hair with some form of stiff head-dress. The dignified simplicity of the long sweeping robes and mantles of the later Plantagenet Period was marred by the incongruity of the reticulated head-dresses of various shapes and sizes. As time went on these became larger and more fantastic. It is uncertain at what precise period the absurd erection known as the "horned" head-dress made its

appearance. It seems to have grown out of the square-shaped head-dress with projecting side pieces which was worn in the thirteenth century. At any rate, it was very common in the fifteenth century, and excited much wrath and ridicule. Priests thundered against it in the pulpit, and poets satirized it, all to no purpose. The "horned" head-dress stood its ground. Yet it must have been very unbecoming. The hair appears to have been gathered into a network on either side of the face; from this reticulated case projected a frame with two points on which was stretched a quantity of fine white linen. The whole thing was of enormous width, and probably of considerable weight as well. The "mitre" head-dress, which was shaped something like a bishop's mitre and had a veil attached falling down behind, was another variety much worn, and a degree less objectionable, when not very huge.

Then there was invented a head-dress called the "tower" or "steeple." Its French name was "hennin." It appeared in France, says Monstrelet, in 1428, and seems to have come from Flanders and the adjacent French provinces, and not to have been adopted in Paris until it had been popularized in other parts of the country. This was a period when, according to Viollet-le-Duc, there was a tendency towards a certain cast of countenance

among women. The hair being drawn well away from the forehead gave a *dégagé* look to the face; and as this mode of coiffure was universal, all the women of that epoch bore an appearance of similarity, the features conforming themselves to a type in harmony with the fashions of the day. The fashions being so striking in the fifteenth century, it is probable enough that there was a superficial resemblance among persons really unlike. We all know the effect of a distinctive shape in bonnets or gowns, when it becomes generally adopted: individuality is obscured. The "steeple" head-dress must have helped to produce this illusion of similarity. It was a very imposing structure, made of rolls upon rolls of linen, towering some two feet above the head, and going to a point like an extinguisher. From the top hung a long veil made of some light gauzy material and very ample. Occasionally it was arranged for the veil to fall over the face as well as down the back. Another name for the "steeple" head-dress was "Cauchoise," supposed to be derived from the Pays de Caux in Normandy, where the fashion is said to have originated; and the Normandy women clung to the "Cauchoise" for centuries after it was abandoned elsewhere. It was so much worn at one period by all classes in France, that the Court ladies

began to regard it with disfavour, and would not wear it on State occasions.

There were many other varieties of head-gear worn in England at this time. Women in the middle ranks very often wore cloth caps, several breadths of stuff being twisted round the head and the ends caught in at the sides to form wings. Then there were large Turkish turbans, and round high caps with loose kerchiefs falling to the ground. There was also a covering called the "butterfly" head-dress. But whatever the particular shape and make might be, whether it was the "horned," the "mitre," the "steeple," the "butterfly," or the cloth cap, the head-dress was always a weighty structure, hot and cumbersome, and for the most part excessively inconvenient. As for the hair, it was scarcely ever seen, and must, one would think, have grown thin and poor under constant pressure and confinement.

Among men, hoods, hats, and caps of every fantastic shape were worn. The chaperon or hood was gathered up into a crown with a long tippet attached which trailed on the ground, or was tucked into the girdle, or wrapped round the neck to be out of the way. Sometimes it was twisted up and made to stand out in the shape of a fan. What were then called bonnets came in for men, and also

caps made of cloth or velvet with a single feather stuck in the front. Gradually the head-gear lessened in size. We see the fine gentlemen with small jaunty caps, and their hair hanging on their necks. Some of these caps fitted close to the head and had a roll of fur round the edge, or were turned up at the side or back with a feather. But at no time during the reign of the Lancastrians and Yorkists did any one fashion of head-gear become paramount.

"An English man or woman now,
(I'll make excuse for neither)
Composèd are, I know not how,
Of many shreds together:
Italian, Spaniard, French and Dutch,
Of each of these they have a touch."

CHAPTER IV.

The sumptuary laws against dress in England—Their application to all classes—Need for constant re-enactment—Fresh edicts against extravagance in mourning garb—Sumptuary laws in Scotland—Irish dress: the saffron dye forbidden—Conformity to English style ordered.

> "There may no lord take up a newe gise,
> But that a knave shalle the same up take."
>
> OCCLEVE, *De Regimine Principum*.

ALTHOUGH Henry IV. had not a very secure seat upon the throne, and was more or less occupied all through his reign with quelling revolts, he found time to promulgate a number of sumptuary laws called forth by the increasing love of display among all classes. As under the Plantagenets, the primary object of these laws was to save the people from themselves, and in addition there was a jealousy on the part of the governing classes of any attempts at equality. The nobles felt that their dignity was in danger when their habiliments were copied by the democracy. In a country like England, permeated with the spirit of feudalism,

appearance counted for a great deal, and it was like a breaking down of the social barriers for the commonalty to adopt the fashions of their masters. But the sumptuary laws went further than merely distinguishing between the classes and the masses. They made nice distinctions among the different ranks in those two great divisions. Yeomen were permitted to wear no other fur than that of the fox, the otter, and the cony. No one with less than £20 a year or goods to the value of £200 was to wear a girdle, a dagger, or a baselard. The latter weapon was an ornamental knife, which dandies were fond of carrying. Says a rhymester, in the time of the Lancastrians—

"Prenegard, prenegard, thus were I myn baselard.
Lestenit, lordyngs, I you beseke,
Ther is non man worth a leke,
Be he sturdy, be he meke,
But he bere a baselard.
Myn baselard hath a shethe of red,
And a clene loket of led,
Me thinkit I may bere up myn hed,
For I bere myn baselard."

An exception was made in favour of those who were heirs to estates of fifty marks (£33 6*s.* 8*d.*) annually, or to goods of the value of £500. A squire's wife unless ennobled might not use minever, ermine, or lettice which resembled ermine, and became popular in Elizabethan days as a material

for ladies' caps. No man under the rank of a banneret could wear cloth of gold, velvet, motley velvet, ermine, martin, lettice, or the material known as "crimson." His gown might not touch the ground, or his sleeves be made wide and hanging. Officers in the army on duty were exempted from this restriction, but it is difficult to see why men in military service should want to wear trailing gowns and sleeves, or velvet and ermine. No clerk in Chancery or in the Exchequer, or even one employed in the Royal Household, might wear jewellery, or the rare kinds of fur, or have accoutrements of gold. For the clergy there were special regulations according to their status and office. An archbishop and a bishop might wear what they pleased, and those dignitaries invariably preferred the most costly raiment, but the ordinary parish priest, indeed any priest below the degree of canon, was prohibited from using minever, ermine, large fur-lined hoods and gilded trappings for his horse, and no chaplain might wear a girdle or a baselard decorated with silver. Love of quantity was the fashionable vice then—

"His armes two han righ ynoughe to done,
And somwhat more, his sleves up to holde.
The taillours, I trowe, mote hereafter sone
Shape in the felde, they shalle not sprede and folde
On her bord, thoughe they never so fayne wolde,

The clothe that shalle be in a gowne wrought,
Take an hole clothe is best, for lesse is nought." *

A general order applying to all classes was made against cutting the edges of sleeves or the borders of gowns into the form of letters, leaves, and other devices, and the tailor who made such a gown was liable to imprisonment. This was a fantastic fashion, which had survived from the preceding era, and had been carried to a ridiculous excess; but it was not more absurd than the streamers and tippets, hanging from the elbows and the point of the hood, which were allowed to pass unforbidden. No doubt these lettered edges added considerably to the cost of making, and cutting away so much stuff involved a great waste of material.

Of course the sumptuary laws were disregarded, as they were under the Plantagenets; and neither Henry V. nor Henry VI. troubled to reenforce them. Under Edward IV., however, matters wore a different aspect. The war with France was over, the Wars of the Roses had exhausted all desire for further domestic strife, and the king, who was a lover of peace, gave his whole attention to home affairs. The sumptuary laws were revived and extended to suit the requirements of the times.

* Occleve, *De Regimine Principum.*

In 1463 a petition was presented to Parliament against the "inordinate use of apparell and aray of men and women."* This being the era of the introduction of the doublet and stomacher for which all sorts of fine and costly materials were used, various enactments were made regarding these articles. No knight under the estate of a lord, or his wife, was allowed to wear a stomacher—sometimes called a corset—worked with gold, or any cloth of gold or sable, under a penalty of twenty marks (£13 6*s.* 8*d.*); and no bachelor knight, except he were a Knight of the Garter, might wear velvet or cloth of velvet under the same penalty. Purple cloth of silk was forbidden to every one under the degree of a lord, and velvet, figured satin, counterfeit cloth of silk, and "wrought corsets" to all beneath the rank of knight, sons of lords and their wives excepted. Squires in general might not wear either damask or satin, though there were several exceptions to this rule.

The officers of the king's household were permitted to wear sable and ermine, but no one not having an annual income of £40 might wear martin, minever, pure grey, or girdles ornamented with gold and silver, or kerchiefs costing more than three shillings and threepence. Fustian, which was a finer

* *Antiquarian Repertory.*

material than that which now goes by the name, was not to be worn by any one with less than forty shillings annually, on pain of paying that sum as a fine, and the same prohibition applied to all furs but lambskin, to "scarlet" and to "cloth in grain." As previous enactments had ordained that only persons above a certain rank should be permitted to wear long gowns, so now, in view of the tendency to run to the other extreme, no one under the rank of a lord was to wear any jacket, cloak, or gown shorter than a certain prescribed length, and the garments that failed to reach such length were to be forfeited. It was then a common fashion to pad the doublets, and this abuse of cotton and wool called forth a special edict which forbade yeomen and any below that degree to stuff their doublets; such persons were to be content with lining, or pay a penalty of six shillings and eightpence. It was also the fashion to stuff the hose, and a contemporary poet bewails the extravagance of those "who monstruse hose delyghte:"—

"As now of late in lesser thinges,
To furnyshe forthe theare pryde;
With woole, with flaxe, with here also
To make thear bryeches wyde.
What hurte and damage doth ensew
And fall upon the poore,
For want of woole and flaxe of late
Which monstrous hose devore."

A great effort was made to put down the "poulaines:" a knight was forbidden to wear points longer than two inches to his shoes or boots, under penalty of paying a fine of forty pence, and shoemakers who made them longer were fined the same sum. It was afterwards enacted that no shoemaker residing in London, or within three miles of the city, might make shoes with longer points, under a penalty of twenty shillings, and the clergy were empowered to put under a curse those who extended their toes beyond the ordained length. It was, however, the introduction of the fashion of broad-toed shoes which really put an end to the "Polish Points" rather than the majesty of the law.

Then, again, cloth of gold of tissue—a superfine material—was reserved for princes and dukes, plain cloth of gold for lords and those above them, velvet doublets and satin and damask gowns for persons who were of the rank of knights, except they were the king's squires, various penalties being imposed for non-compliance. Camlet, which was a mixture of wool and silk, was among the articles forbidden to yeomen and those below the rank of squire. The labouring class might not buy cloth at more than two shillings a yard, or hose above fourteen pence, or kerchiefs at more than twelve pence the

square. That they should ever have paid more seems out of the question when the rate of wages is taken into consideration. In the reign of Henry VI. (1422–1461) a chief hind or carter received twenty shillings a year, and four shillings for clothing, while a female servant was paid on an average ten shillings a year and four shillings for clothing.* Under these conditions it seems unnecessary to have prohibited silver girdles to labourers' wives, but they must have worn such things occasionally or the enactment would hardly have been made. It was decreed, too, that no wimples were to be sold above the price of ten shillings each, but several alterations were made in these laws during the reign of Edward IV. To encourage home manufactures, no one under the rank of a lord was allowed to wear woollen cloth made out of the kingdom.

At the close of the fifteenth century it was found necessary to renew the edicts against extravagance in mourning garb. A duke or a marquis was permitted to have sixteen yards of stuff for his gown, sloppe, and mantle; a viscount twelve; a baron, if a Knight of the Garter, eight; a knight six; and squires and gentlemen five. No one beneath the rank of a squire might wear a mourning hood,

* *Antiquarian Repertory.*

but only a tippet a quarter of a yard broad. Royalty still asserted its privilege of choosing its own colour for mourning. Henry VI. wore blue for the Emperor Sigismund. On the death of Henry V. the Drapers' Company went hooded in white, but householders of London were ordered to wear black russet gowns and hoods, and black was more generally used. In *Henry IV.* we read: "Shall we go throw away our coats of steel, and wrap our bodies in black mourning gowns?" Black armour was worn in mourning, but on other occasions as well. Violet was the general colour for Court mourning in France, though attempts were occasionally made to introduce black. Widowed queens, as we know, wore white. Presumably, mourning was worn in this country by all ranks, or the laws relating to it would not have been so precise, but we cannot suppose it to have been so common as now. Strict seclusion was the chief way of paying respect to the dead in the Middle Ages.

Sumptuary laws were also passed in Scotland in the middle of the fifteenth century. Earls were ordered to have their mantles made of brown granick, open in front, with white fur lining, and little hoods of the same cloth to lie on the shoulders. The other Lords of Parliament were to have red mantles lined with silk and trimmed

with grey fur. Commissaries of boroughs must go to Parliament in blue cloaks, and advocates who pleaded in Parliament were ordered to wear a green habit. It was enacted later that no one living in a city or borough, unless an alderman, bailiff, or a member of the Borough Council, might wear silk or scarlet gowns, while their wives and daughters were ordered to conform to the general fashion as prevailing in England and on the Continent in the matter of hoods and kerchiefs, which looks as if the Scotch women still wore the snood and linen coif. That they wore trains like English dames is evident, as these appendages were expressly prohibited except on holidays. An odd enactment was also passed that women should not go to church with their faces covered.

Sumptuary laws of a kind were passed in Ireland, or rather certain articles were forbidden. In 1466 an Act was passed prohibiting the wearing of shirts dyed saffron colour,* which was a favourite hue with the Irish. This, however, did not prevent their being worn up to the reign of Elizabeth. The men at least appear to have retained the ancient costume—the flowing cloaks or "phalingæ" and the conical caps—as we find an Act of Edward IV. ordering residents in the counties of Dublin, Meath,

* J. C. Walker, *Historical Essay on Irish Dress.*

Kildare and Uriel, to dress after the English fashion, and to cut their beards like Englishmen. The Irish always favoured long beards from their barbarous days onwards. In the reign of Henry VI. they delighted in long moustaches, which English dwellers in Ireland were forbidden to copy. The women's costume among the better classes did not probably differ very greatly from that of England and France. The kirtle and mantle, the reticulated head-dress of large proportions, the fillets and long veils, and the costly girdles of which we read, imply that the dress was substantially the same in form, although there were doubtless differences of detail, Ireland being out of the current of Continental life. As a subject country it was from time to time harassed by English interference with its national dress. Sometimes this interference was vexatious and unnecessary, at other times salutary. But after the time of the Stuarts the Irish in the main followed the fashions that prevailed in England.

CHAPTER V.

Use of rich materials—Introduction of velvet—Satin much worn—Taste in colour: more black seen—Development of the wool trade—Importance of the London drapers—Precautions against spurious articles—The Great City Companies and their liveries—Linen and royal washing bills.

"Industrious merchants meet and market there
The world's collected wealth."

SOUTHEY.

THE fifteenth century saw a great development of trade and commerce. New and rich materials were used in large quantities, and the imports were increasing rapidly. In the wardrobe accounts of royal and noble personages constant mention is made of velvet, not only for clothing, but also for horse trappings. There were accoutrements of russet velvet and of green velvet garnished with aiglettes of silver and gilt in the stables of Edward IV. Tawny was a favourite colour at this period, and we frequently read of tawny velvet, and tawny "sloppes" of leather. Shakespeare gives the Bishop

of Winchester, great-uncle to Henry VI., a train of servants in "tawny coats." There were all colours in velvets. At the coronation of Richard III., the Duke of Buckingham had a habit and caparison of blue velvet. Edward IV. for his doublets and mantles had blue and tawny mixed, white velvet with black spots, pure white and pure black, black and white, and green, all of which are put down at eight shillings the yard. Crimson velvet from Montpelier in Gascony is charged at fourteen shillings the yard, and in the *Household Book* of John Duke of Norfolk, fourteen and fifteen shillings a yard are put down for black velvet, which shows that the price greatly varied. Velvet was probably woven in wider widths than it is now, or we should not find single yards and even half-yards ordered; as, for instance, "half a yard of black velvet for a riding hood at fourteen shillings and fourpence."* There was considerable commerce with Italy, and Florence, Venice, Genoa, Milan, and Lucca were all making velvet, Lucca being the first of the Italian cities to enter upon the manufacture. Of course the new material found its way into the wardrobes of the wealthy English, and was especially suited to the doublets and short cloaks. Florence was very

* *Household Book of John Duke of Norfolk and Thomas Earl of Surrey*, 1481–1490.

proud of her velvets, and during the fifteenth century was decidedly ahead of Milan in the manufacture. A suit of velvet vestments made at Florence was bequeathed to Westminster Priory by Henry VII.

Satin now came very much into favour with the wealthy. It was quite a costly material, like velvet, varying from seven to ten shillings a yard; but, as in the case of the velvets, a yard must have been of much greater width than satin is made at the present time. "Ten yards of tawny satin for two gowns for my lady's daughters, at nine shillings," are entered in the *Household Book* of the Duke of Norfolk. Very often we read of black satin, and also of purple, for making doublets.

There was a change of taste as regards colour. Black was seldom worn at earlier periods, but now, black camlet, black damask, black satin, and black velvet were all much used. Purple and green are mentioned too, and heavier and more sombre tones prevailed in the apparel of the rich. Still a great deal of cloth of gold, scarlet cloth, and other brilliant stuffs were used for festive occasions and State ceremonies. Henry V. was in debt to a Lucca merchant to the amount of £478 18*s.* 8*d.* for cloth of gold and other merchandise, at a time when he was trying to raise supplies for the war

in France.* Scarlet cloth at from seven to ten shillings a yard, "frenge of gold of Venys" at six shillings per ounce, presumably for trimming, "baudekyn of silke" at three shillings and fourpence the piece, figure as items in the *Wardrobe Accounts* of Edward IV. The Duke of Norfolk referred to above gave as much as four pounds per yard for cloth of gold, buying fifteen yards at a time. That quantities of material came regularly from abroad is shown by the numerous items under the head of "Foreyn Receyte of Stuff" in the royal accounts.

The woollen cloth trade of England was growing fast, and to encourage the home manufactures Henry IV. had prohibited the importation of foreign cloth in the first year of his reign, though this prohibition was afterwards removed. He also ordered importers of foreign merchandise to invest all the proceeds of their sales in English goods, only taking with them sufficient coin for necessaries. A few years after, treaties were made with the Duke of Burgundy, who was also Earl of Flanders, in order to secure mutual freedom of trading between Calais and Flanders, the Flemish depending very largely on English wool for their manufactures. There was a truce, too, with the Duke of Bretagne

* Dean Church, *English Men of Action*, "Henry V."

to give security to merchants on both sides of the Channel.

Holland was at this time rising into great importance as a commercial State, while between England and the Netherlands there was such constant trade intercourse, and the two nations were so closely connected by mercantile ties, that, in time of war, treaties were entered into for the protection of commerce. Still, the troubles of the first half of the fifteenth century retarded the progress of the wool trade. The king claimed large subsidies on wool, and was accustomed to borrow on these securities from foreign merchants. In 1403 Henry IV. borrowed a thousand marks (£666 13*s.* 4*d.*) from ten Genoese merchants and five hundred (£333 6*s.* 8*d.*) from five merchants of Florence, allowing them as payment the duties on imports and on the wool exported from England for four months. But, to assist English manufacturers, an Act was passed for a term of three years making all English and Welsh cloths that were not more than thirteen and fourpence the dozen—a dozen of cloth being a piece of fourteen yards—free of duty.

The London drapers, who got their first charter under Edward III., numbered more than one hundred master drapers by the year 1415, and there were companies of drapers in other

cities, and guilds of mercers, tapicers, and tailors. Some ten years before this it was felt that the London drapers were becoming too arrogant, and were abusing their power. An Act was therefore passed permitting the country drapers to sell their goods to any one they chose instead of, as formerly, to the London company.* The wool staple had been moved from Westminster to Staple Inn, Holborn, by Richard II., and in 1397 Blackwell Hall was opened for the selling of cloth. There was, however, a great deal of trade carried on in Westminster, and Henry VI. is said to have had six wool houses in New Palace Yard.

As regards the provinces, the southern and eastern counties were the great centres of the cloth manufacture. The Norfolk worsteds, which are supposed to derive their name from the village of Worstede or Worstedosta,† were very famous, and the Norwich magistrates used to measure and seal the stuff before it was put up for sale. Similar precautions would seem to have been taken in Salisbury, and there was even a prohibition against removing cloth and the material known as "motley" out of the city for sale. At Taunton were made broad cloths, kerseys, straits (a coarse kind of cloth),

* W. J. Ashley, *Early History of English Woollen Industry.*

† Jas. Bonwick, *Romance of the Wool Trade.*

and a variety of other goods. Devon and Cornwall were manufacturing largely, and a petition was presented by the House of Commons to Henry V. praying that the straight cloths known as the "Dozens" of Devonshire and Cornwall might pay customs like the broad cloths. Worcester cloth was so good that in 1422 it was forbidden to the Benedictine monks who held their chapter in Westminster Abbey. Woollen goods were at this time exported from Scotland, a duty of two shillings in the pound being charged. A practice which had grown up of conveying sheep from England to Flanders was prohibited, as it was found to depress the price of wool.

England was flourishing enough now to excite jealousy and hostility, and embroilments took place with ships of various nations, among others with those sailing under the Genoese flag. At length a treaty of peace was made between Henry V. and the Doge of Genoa, and the London merchants were compensated for the losses they had sustained. There were close relations, not always of a friendly character, with Bayonne, and the English merchants complained of the impositions exacted by the Mayor and escheators. Various enactments were passed by the Lancastrian kings in the interests of commerce, and even

under Henry V., who was too much occupied with his wars in France to give much heed to the interests of trade, merchants enjoyed statutory protection.

In order to prevent the public from being cheated with spurious articles, all gold and silver embroideries which were worked with imitation threads to resemble the precious metals were seized and declared forfeited. This shows what quantities of such materials were used. A great deal of "tissue" was imported, which was really the silky, shining web known previously as siclaton and baudekin, but it got the name of tissue from tissue paper being laid between the folds.*

The "Merchant King," Edward IV., was constantly taking measures to extend the trade and commerce of the country. He confirmed the liberties of the Hanse merchants and restored free trade with their cities. He ordered that all persons employed in the cloth manufacture should be paid their full wages in money instead of being compelled, as formerly, to receive part payment in kind, and in goods that were often comparatively useless. He himself received large sums from the Mayor and Company of Staplers, to whom he granted in return the subsidies on wool. The woollen industry

* The Very Rev. D. Rock, D.D., *Textile Fabrics.*

was at this time carried on in the houses of the masters and journeymen. The masters procured the raw material, and when it was worked up sold it to a merchant or middle man, so that the manufacturing process was growing more and more apart from the selling process, and the producer and the seller were becoming as distinct personages as they are to-day. All crafts and guilds had been compelled to be registered under Henry VI., and the craftsmen, who had long been oppressed by the guilds, now obtained independence and full liberty of action. The struggle which had been going on during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries between the patrician and the plebeian trading bodies, came to a close with the triumph of the democracy.

The great Merchant Tailors' Company, the Drapers, the Haberdashers, Mercers, and Cloth-workers, all had their charters renewed under the Lancastrian and Yorkist kings, who were honorary members of the Merchant Tailors' Company. Tailors and drapers were more closely allied in former times, and the tailors made wearing apparel for women as well as men. In the middle of the fifteenth century we begin to hear of the silk-throwers, women who made all sorts of narrow goods, such as ribands and girdles. Their rivals were the Lombards, who were constantly hampering

their business by importing articles of the same class. The mercers now became large dealers in silks and velvets, for which there was a great demand, and abandoned haberdashery. The liveries of the Companies were changed from time to time. The grocers, for instance, who first adopted scarlet and green, changed their livery to scarlet and black, then to dark red and dark blue, and afterwards to violet and crimson. The brewers wore green, "savy brown," "blood colour," and "cloths of ray." The leathersellers, in the time of Henry VI., wore red and blue gowns with fur borderings and collars, and light-coloured girdles. When that king returned to England after being crowned King of France, he was met by the Mayor and Aldermen of London in suits of red spangled with silver, and the Liverymen of the City wore white gowns and scarlet hoods. The statutes against the giving of liveries without licence, were renewed both by Henry VI. and Edward IV., as this custom was found productive of disturbance.

As for linen, the greater part of that used by the higher ranks was imported from Flanders and Brabant. Rheims was famous also for its fine linen. There was some Irish linen exported in the fifteenth century, but it had not then become a staple manufacture. A great deal of fine linen was

wanted for surplices and altar cloths, and all this was imported; the cost was about eightpence an ell. There was no linen made in Scotland, except of the coarsest kind. Holland cloth was used for kings' shirts and Brussels cloth for sheets. Cloth of Rennes, which was very fine and cost four shillings and ninepence per yard, was the material probably employed for stomachers and kerchiefs.

Linen now becomes an important item in the royal wardrobe. There is constant mention of the making and washing of shirts, stomachers, kerchiefs, and sheets, in the *Wardrobe Accounts* of Edward IV. Linen was at this time usually bleached with sulphur-water. The washing was sometimes given to men and sometimes to women. There are various payments to one Robert Bolster for washing sheets at threepence per pair, the number of breadths in the sheet being specified, whether two or three. But when a woman was employed, she seems usually to have made as well as washed the linen. For instance: "To Alice Shapster for making and wasshing of twenty-four sherts and twenty-four stomachers, five dozen hand-couverchieffes and twelve combe-couverchieffes, for making and wasshing of every sherte twelvepence, for making of every couverchief twopence." Again, "for making and wasshing of fourteen pair of shets, everiche

of three breds, for every pair making and washing twentypence." Linen was certainly much more largely used in this era. There is a great difference noticeable since the days of Henry III., when the washing bill for the household of a great lady like the Countess of Leicester was only one shilling and threepence for five months. There were then no snowy shirts to be displayed under slashed sleeves, no starched stomachers, and probably very few sheets were used.

CHAPTER VI.

Armour: its elaboration—Hanging sleeves worn by armed knights—The surcoat gives place to the tabard—Weapons: the pole-axe, mace, and two-handed sword—Effect of civil on military dress.

> "Ay me! what perils do environ
> The man that meddles with cold iron!
> What plaguy mischiefs and mishaps
> Do dog him still with after claps!"
>
> BUTLER, *Hudibras.*

THIS was an important period for military dress. The introduction of plate armour, which had already taken place, gave opportunity for the luxury of the age to display itself in a new form. The plates which protected the elbows and the knees, the gloves, the bascinet or helmet, were frequently painted or else adorned with a rich chasing round the edges. A jewelled wreath would sometimes be placed round the bascinet, and an inscription engraven on the forehead plate. A single plume or a bunch of waving feathers appears on the bascinet, standing upright at the back or side, but the great crested helmet, called the tilting helmet, was only worn at

tournaments, as a rule. The bascinet itself underwent a change of shape, approaching more nearly that of the German helmet. Another invention was the sallet, a kind of skull-cap of plate, and steel caps with oval plates for the ears were also worn. The elbow-plates now became very large, and the breast-plate assumed a globular form.

One of the most curious fashions in the military dress of this period was that of wearing large, loose, hanging sleeves, with indented edges like those of civil costume. They were put on over the armour, independently of anything else, and fastened just on the shoulder. A knight in full war panoply, with a pair of immense flapping-sleeves of scarlet and blue cloth or violet and green—for the lining was generally a contrasting colour—presented a most striking spectacle. The emblazoned surcoat fitting closely to the figure, with the splendid belt girdling the hips, gave place to a loose ungirdled tabard, also emblazoned and sometimes having sleeves down to the elbow. Heraldic devices on military dress were still as popular as ever, although they seem to have disappeared from the dress of gallants and great ladies. Henry V. is described as wearing at Agincourt "a neat and shining armour with a large and brilliant helmet, and on this he placed a crown radiant with jewels,

and he put over him a tunic adorned with the Arms of France and England." In front of the helmet was a famous ruby, given to the Black Prince by King Pedro of Castille, in 1367, after the battle of Nagara, near Vittoria. This ruby now forms part of the crown made for the Queen in 1838.* The horses too had as elaborate a costume as their riders, and were covered with trappings of the most gorgeous kind. Their saddle-cloths were emblazoned like their masters' jackets, and the horse and the knight together made a brilliant mass of colour.

A kind of steel petticoat now appears below the jacket. Every inch of the body is protected, and doubly protected in many parts with extra plates and lappets. Indeed, the armour is more and more complicated and elaborate. A new weapon in the shape of a formidable pole-axe was popular at this period, and was always carried by the leaders in a battle. The mace was especially used by the king's sergeants-at-arms, and was also seen in the hands of prelates in place of the sword. At the battle of Agincourt the English archers were armed with "death-dealing maces,"† in

* Ed. J. Watherston, *A Few Words on Gems and Precious Stones.*

† Sir Jas. H. Ramsay, *Lancaster and York: A Century of English History.*

addition to their other weapons. Maces were sometimes made of silver, and for tournament purposes they were of wood. In shape they resembled a beadle's mace.

There was also a ferocious instrument called a two-handed sword, that is, a sword with two blades, but it never came into general use. The ordinary sword was worn suspended in front.

As for the archers, they often went both barefooted and bare-headed, but sometimes they wore regular helmets, or large, soft, cloth hats and strong shoes. They were never regularly encased in armour, but wore loose jackets and hose which gave ample play to their limbs, and enabled them to wield their heavy bows with freedom. They often wore knee-plates and elbow-plates, and were armed with swords and hatchets in addition to their bows and arrows. A cross-bow man frequently had an attendant called a paviser, who stooped in front of him holding a huge heart-shape shield, named after its bearer, to protect the archer while shooting.

It was a transition period in warfare. Guns, and guns of English make, were in use, and the export of both guns and gunpowder was forbidden during the reigns of Henry IV. and Henry V. The guns were frequently loaded with stones. A

clumsy kind of artillery had been employed under the Plantagenet kings, and now a hand cannon came into use. Still the archers were the great strength of the English armies. "Our archers shall be placed in the midst," orders Richard III. on the eve of the battle of Bosworth, and when the enemy's drum was heard afar off, he cries—

> "Fight, gentlemen of England! fight, bold yeomen!
> Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head!"

Richard, being deformed, strongly inclined towards all the strange fashions of the day, and had his garments padded and puffed, and slashed and ornamented, in the hope of concealing the defects of his body. The influence of civil costume is discernible on the armour, which began to be fluted about this time in imitation of the pleated doublets. The long peaked shoes were also copied in military dress, and a knight in full armour had toes of plate extending something like Dutch skates. If he were unlucky enough to be unhorsed, the "sollerets" must have been sadly in his way. So ill adapted were they for actual warfare that they were commonly discarded before going into battle. It was a good time for the armourer, who had wide scope for his skill in devising and fitting the numerous small plates and gussets which entered

into the composition of the elaborate costume of the soldier. As there was a good deal of chain mail armour in existence it was cut up and utilized in making the gussets in the breast-plates.* A custom was creeping in of engraving and gilding the armour; and the hand guns were emblazoned with heraldic devices. Everything that ingenuity could invent was done to make the military as gay as the civil costume.

* J. F. Hodgetts, *The English in the Middle Ages.*

TUDOR PERIOD.

END OF FIFTEENTH TO BEGINNING OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TUDOR PERIOD.

"This world
Is full of change, change, change,—nothing but change!"
D. M. MULOCK, *Immutable.*

ONCE more the nation was ruled by strong, resolute wills and guided by steady hands. The Tudors were an obstinate race—imperious, passionate, and despotic. But they knew how to govern, and they came at a time when England needed sovereigns who could make their authority felt. The national pulse was beating high. There was fever in the blood. A strong spirit of unrest was stirring in the breasts of the people. Political commotions they had known; civil strifes they had groaned under; they had tasted the triumphs of foreign conquest and the bitterness of defeat; they had seen great families overthrown, the representatives of noble houses despoiling and slaying each other, kings deposed and murdered. But they had been as yet

but half awake. Revolutions had rolled over their heads, of whose significance they had been only dimly aware. Their inner life had been scarcely touched. They had not realized the power that lay in their dormant faculties, and that was now awakening into being; they had not gauged the strength of the impulse which was to urge them on to new enterprises, to a wider, more international existence. The upheaval in the religious life stirred depths which had not been ruffled by the storms of foreign or civil warfare. The new learning, the spread of education, the multiplication of books, were forces more potent and more enduring than any political convulsions. It was a new England that had broken with traditions, an England which now read and questioned, an England kindling with hitherto unknown hopes and desires. A new national literature was springing up; poets were singing; actors were playing; men were telling of strange doctrines, of new discoveries; science was lifting a corner of her veil, and art was finding patrons and followers. Men's minds were quickened by fresh ideas, their senses excited by novel allurements. There was movement in every department of life, political, social, commercial. The nation was seething, bubbling over with energy. Under weak rulers its forces would have been



MARY STUART,

At the age of thirteen.

FROM THE ORIGINAL CONTEMPORARY PORTRAIT IN THE POSSESSION OF THE LORD DE L'ISLE AND DUDLEY AT PENSHURST.

dissipated, its self-control lost. Under the tyrannical Tudors it gained strength and coherence.

It was a merry, busy, bustling time; a time for shows, revels, masquerades, and the new and delightful play-acting; a time, too, for trade on a scale never reached before. London, with its dirty streets and dark houses, so contemptuously compared by Spanish and Italian ambassadors with the roomy palaces of their own cities, held many a substantial merchant whose interests had to be taken into consideration in regulating the foreign policy of the country. The London traders, who sent William of Orange half a million to help him beat back the Spaniard, were becoming the backbone of the nation. If they lived like plain burgesses they were able to control the actions of princes. All their weight was thrown on the side of peace, to keeping foreign ports open, and the highways of the sea clear. They had nothing to gain by war or by religious strifes, and they were unanimous in holding to the established order of things when the flame of fanaticism was burning high.

They loved solidity, too, in minor matters. Their massive oak furniture, their heavy tapestry hangings, their pewter and brass vessels, their substantial silver tankards, were in accordance with the abundant meat and strong ale and wines which they

habitually consumed. There was little show about a London merchant's dwelling. Many of the houses were still of wood, though brick and stone had been introduced as building materials. Glass had taken the place of the old lattices; but it did not admit much light, for the windows were small, and cut up into many panes. There were few luxuries within, but certain comforts were not wanting: carpets were now sometimes seen in the rooms of the wealthier classes, though not often, and there was a fair supply of good bedding, linen sheets and coverlets. But the poorer people in the great city ate and drank and slept in dirt and squalor. Erasmus ascribes the visitation of the plague to the uncleansed streets, the decaying rushes on the floors of the houses, the accumulations of dirt and refuse which passed for beds among the populace, their coarse salt food unrelieved by fresh fruit and vegetables. Even in the Palace of Henry VIII. the kitchen scullions slept on the floor naked or in filthy rags, until the nuisance they created caused them to be driven out and provided for elsewhere. Fortunately London had open fields close at hand and wide commons just without its gates, and the tastes of the people were all in favour of manly sports and exercises. Otherwise matters would have been much worse.

It was a lawless, boisterous period; gross crime was frequent, and too lightly punished when the criminal was a rich man, and there were complaints that the poor did not get justice done them in the law courts. All sorts of offences were paid for with the death penalty, and the priestly garb was no protection. It was considered rare sport to see the gallows working, and among the "public entertainments" during the year 1559–60 occurs the following: "March 8, eleven persons, malefactors, rode to hanging, seven men and four women; one of them was a priest; his crime was cutting a purse wherein was three shillings." Beggars abounded throughout the country, and were elaborately classified according to their several degrees of vagabondage, the rogues being distinguished from the merely unfortunate, and the greater rogues from the lesser. For the relief of the really helpless poor there was a system of aid, showing that our present poor-law has a pretty long history.

In the rural districts a great change had taken place in the condition of the people. With the fall of the feudal system there had grown up a fresh phase of social life. There was a new class of landowners, and a new class of tenants. The men who, formerly, would have been bound by military service to some lord, or have lived on his land as

dependents, ready at any moment to do his bidding, unable to buy and sell like free men, or call any possession their own, were now theoretically independent. They owed no allegiance to any one but the sovereign. But they were not always better off on that account. The new men who had been granted lands by the king, the needy upstarts who fawned to obtain favours, were hard landlords, trying by every means in their power to get more money out of their property without reference to the interests of the peasants. Villages were allowed to decay, and the ground was cleared for pasture. Rents were raised, and the agriculturist found a new class of farming gentry interfering between him and his purchasers by carrying his produce to the markets themselves, and forcing down his prices to make their profit. Bread became dear because the new men preferred raising sheep to growing corn.

Money was freely spent in towns, and London citizens and artisans were growing richer and richer with the increasing traffic in luxuries. But the rural labourer was too far off to benefit by the extravagance of the townsfolk, even if it had been of a kind to affect his pursuits. His condition was not greatly changed or his comforts much increased. He still lived in dark, unwholesome dwellings, and went to work and lay down at night as before in his

dirty smock. His food was coarse, and he spent his leisure hours at the nearest ale-house, quaffing fiery drinks. Inns of all sorts were abundant, and were the chief places—in the country-side the only places—of recreation for the poor. The peasant had to depend on himself for most of the articles of daily use, to learn to make and mend his tools, to spin and weave his garments, for although weekly markets were held in the chief towns, the roads were too bad to admit of frequent communication. A village was like a little township with its own home-grown supplies, and the character of the large landowner was of the utmost importance to the daily welfare of the rustic. Rents might go up or down according to the caprice of the lord of the manor, and fines might be inflicted for trifling offences. Statutes were made fixing the rate of wages; but these measures, intended for the amelioration of the lot of the labourer, frequently roused discontent.

As for the nobility, many of them were in a bad case. If not utterly ruined in the Civil Wars, they had been so impoverished that they were forced to yield their places to new men. It was an extravagant period, when every one who could spent freely, and none were more foolishly lavish than the old aristocracy. The splendour of Court life was a

heavy drain on the resources of their encumbered estates. And they were not in the current of the modern life. They were handicapped by tradition. The new men saw and eagerly seized their opportunity, while the Tudors, who always rode on the crest of the wave, showed no sentimental fondness for surrounding themselves with men of ancient race and lineage, if others served their purpose better. The great families who still remained in the fulness of their power profited by the fall of their neighbours, and enriched themselves, until "from being peers of the realm, each of them had become almost the peer of the king himself." They kept magnificent state, had large retinues of knights, squires, household retainers and servants, and entertained royally every day. Cardinal Wolsey had in his household five hundred persons of noble birth, and many a duke kept a table for two or three hundred persons. Magnificent dress was the natural concomitant of this style of living, and every fresh opening in trade, every new enterprise and invention, added an additional touch of splendour.

The Tudor Period has been called the beginning of the Modern, the time when we broke with tradition and entered upon a new phase of life. There is a continuity in our social history from

the days of Elizabeth onwards. With the poets, scientists, discoverers, scholars, painters, and players of the sixteenth century, we of the nineteenth have a kinship; we can read their language and share their thoughts. As we look back to the stirring days of Shakespeare, Spenser, Bacon, Locke, Harvey, Erasmus, Galileo, Drake, Frobisher, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Thomas Gresham, we feel that every effort they put forth, every stroke of genius or daring, every seed of enterprise in the world of thought or action, is bearing fruit to-day. And there is the same continuity with regard to costume. Unlike as our modern style may seem to the style of the Tudor, it has its origin in that period. It was then that men took finally to closely fitting in place of loosely flowing garments; it was then that women cast off completely the simplicity of the antique, and adopted a costume modelled, not on the natural lines of the body, but on artificial lines laid down by fashion.

CHAPTER II.

Court and fashionable dress—Public pageants and processions—New Year's gifts—Padded doublets—Pantofles—Partelets—Sleeves.

"For now I will were this, and now I will were that,
And now I will were what I cannot tell what."

"THERE is not any people under the zodiac of heaven," says Philip Stubbes, in his discourse on the "pride of apparell," "how clownish, rural, c. brutish soever, that is so poisoned with this arsenecke of Pride or hath drunk so deep of the dregs of this cup as Ailgna (England) hath." The moralist was not thinking of courtiers and nobles only when he penned these words in the Elizabethan days; his strictures were meant to apply to the whole nation. But if "pride of apparell" were so manifest in every-day life, what words can be found to describe the costly splendour of the great and wealthy, of State pageants and ceremonials? Look into any gentleman's wardrobe, and it will be found crammed with satins and velvets of divers hues, with furs, laces,

frills, and feathers, not to speak of rings and brooches, chains of gold, jewelled caps, and shoes with huge roses of ribands on the instep.

A gallant's toilette was no easy business, and a slow or clumsy servant, no doubt, got many an oath and blow if he failed to tie up the points of the hose, lace the doublet, or arrange the stomacher and frilled shirt to his master's satisfaction. A gentleman's dress had so many fastenings; there was so much tying and lacing of his garments together, that it was impossible he should ever get costumed without assistance. The long hose had to be securely tied by a number of latchets to the doublet; the doublet itself was laced up the front, and the sleeves, being slashed to show the shirt sleeves, had also to be laced sometimes. One can hardly imagine men dressing two or three times a day; once attired they must have remained as they were for the rest of the waking hours. But at a period when there was so much display, and such an habitual wearing of costly materials, the spectacle of gentlemen resplendent in coloured satin and velvet, lace and jewellery, in the early morning, presented nothing incongruous.

The hour of the day did not regulate costume much more than at earlier periods. What did affect it greatly, in Tudor times, were the numerous

festivities, shows, masques, dances, revels, and public processions. The taste for tournaments was not yet over. When Princess Margaret, eldest daughter of Henry VII., was only five years old, a tournament was given in her honour, and ladies rode on white palfreys, in white satin gowns, with crimson satin sleeves. A very elaborate wardrobe was provided for this Princess while still a child, and the velvet gowns, lined with buc[illegible], and damask kirtles, seem quite out of p[illegible]on that youthful figure. It was the custom then to have the sleeves of a different colour and material from the gown — a fashion which has recurred frequently in modern days—and various pairs of sleeves are mentioned as separate items in her wardrobe. This seems to show that the sleeves were movable, and were taken in and out of the gown at pleasure. When, at the age of fourteen, Princess Margaret went to Scotland as the affianced bride of James IV., she carried with her all sorts of splendours in the way of costly velvets and damasks. The royal tailors must have made a fine harvest—the making of women's gowns was done chiefly by men—and the jewellers and goldsmiths too, as Henry VII. sent his daughter forth lavishly provided with plate and jewels. The bridegroom presented his bride with her wedding gown, which

was white flowered damask and crimson velvet, lined partly with taffeta and partly with cloth. James IV. was evidently fond of dress, for he celebrated his marriage by adding to his own wardrobe a number of richly embroidered and furred garments, and, very soon after the wedding, pleased his young Queen by giving her a crimson velvet robe, and a velvet riding-dress. The Queen quite shared her husband's tastes, and even when too ill to rise from her bed, and suffering great pain, the only thing that gave her any pleasure was to gaze at her fine clothes, and she insisted on having new gowns of velvet, silk, cloth of gold and tissue, made and brought to her bedside.*

The usual fashion of the gowns during the first part of the Tudor Period was similar to what had been worn under the Yorkist kings. There were the square necks, the short waists, and full sleeves. We hear little of long hanging sleeves now. The way was being prepared for the full padded sleeves of the Elizabethan Period. Stomachers were worn, of course, but the bodice was not yet stiffened into an artificial shape. There was no constraint about the neck, and the hair was suffered to hang loosely over the shoulders. Though on State occasions, and frequently at other times, trains were worn, the

* M. A. E. Green, *Princesses of England.*

tendency was in favour of shorter gowns, not at present suspended over a frame or stiffened with anything worse than a buckram lining. Men wore their doublets and cloaks as before, and very fine lawn shirts trimmed with lace, embroidered in coloured silks, and finished off with dainty ruffles, in which gold thread was intermixed. Shirts varied in price from ten shillings up to £10, becoming more rather than less costly: "the meanest shirt that is commonly worne of any doest cost a crowne or a noble at the least; and yet this is scarcely thought fine enough for the simplest person that is."* The long hose, made of cloth, velvet, and silk, though they were puffed and slashed, did not attain to any great dimensions in the early part of the Tudor Period. The caps, with their large plumes, seemingly worn as much off the head as on, swinging carelessly back on the shoulders, the Milanese bonnets of velvet and satin with their jewels, were all picturesque and becoming, especially as men wore their hair long, until Henry VIII. insisted on his courtiers cutting off their flowing locks. Gentlemen of the French Court adopted short hair about this time in compliment to their king, Francis I., who was compelled to have his hair cut off owing to an injury to his head. The English

* Ed. F. J. Furnivall, Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses.*

dandies took great pains with their hair, and must have regretted being obliged to part with any of it. Says one—

> "I knyt yt up all the nyght,
> And the day tyme kemb it down ryght,
> And then yt cryspeth, and shyneth as bryght
> As any pyrled gold." *

A military air was given to civil costume by the fashion of wearing swords.

The favourite material at this time was cloth of gold, which was used on all sorts of festive occasions, and for trappings and hangings as well as garments. It was an elastic term, however, applied to certain rich materials of any colour, with gold work wrought into the stuff. Thus we hear of *green* cloth of gold. Henry VII. rode on horseback from the Tower to Westminster on the eve of his coronation in a doublet of cloth of gold, and a gown of purple velvet lined and bordered with ermine. His saddle was of cloth of gold, and his immediate attendants were in gowns of the same. The Queen was in white damask cloth of gold. For the coronation day itself the king was arrayed in a coat of crimson satin, crimson hose, a surcoat and hood lined with minever, and a mantle and cap of crimson satin. A fashion then prevailed

* Ed. F. J. Furnivall, *Ballads from Manuscripts.*

of wearing two shirts, and the King is described as having one shirt of fine lawn and one of crimson "tarteron," open back and front, and laced with silver and gilt fastenings. The Queen was all in crimson, too, but her mantle, with its ermine-lined train, and her surcoat were of velvet. Her hair was allowed to flow over her shoulders, for the little gold nets, or cauls, as they were called, were placed on the head like a cap, the hair falling beneath.

No sovereigns liked show more than the Tudors, and no people loved better to be amused by spectacles than the English of the sixteenth century. London, for all its busy trade, was a city of pleasure. The presence of a gay Court in its midst, always bent on some form of showy amusement, was a constant entertainment for the people. Many of the nobles of the land, and the men who carried on the commerce of the capital, had their residence within its walls. Instead of warehouses, Upper Thames Street was lined with the residences of merchant princes, and great dukes occupied palaces in the Strand. Gay barges moved up and down the river, which was as much a highway for pleasure craft as for ships of merchandise. At any moment a party of fine gentlemen, with their plumed hats, their jewelled swords and daggers, might be seen picking their way along the narrow, ill-kept

streets, followed by their serving-men in liveries. The citizens of London were always ready for any opportunity for decoration, and nothing pleased them better than to drape their windows with tapestry, and exhibit bright hangings of scarlet and gold when any royal progress was to be made.

On the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's public procession through London, on her coronation day, "the City was at very great charge to express their love and joy in the magnificent scaffolds and pageants they had erected, in adorning the conduits, appointing music, preparing speeches and verses to be said to her—which the Queen took very well, and promised to remember it—besides the present of a purse of a thousand marks in gold, which they presented her at the Little Conduit in Cheap where the Aldermen sat." The streets were strewn with gravel along the route of the royal progress, no doubt a very desirable measure in those præ-paving days. "Tapistrie, arras, clothes of golde, silver, velvet, damaske, sattin, and other silkes plentifully hanged all the way as the Quenes Highnes passed from the Towre through the Citie. Out at the windowes all the penthouses of every house did hang a number of ryche and costlye banners and streamers, tyll her Grace came to the upper ende of Cheape." The Queen drove in a chariot, and there was a great

display of crimson velvet trappings on the horses, as well as of scarlet gowns on the trumpeters and attendants. Coronations, however, occurred seldom; but there were frequent festivals in those times, and the State processions to hear sermons on saints' days gave many opportunities for display.

Whenever Queen Elizabeth moved there was much preparation and show, and as she passed through the City the houses would be hung with cloth of gold and silver, silk and velvet, and the craftsmen and members of the guilds would turn out in their liveries to welcome her. On the opening of her second Parliament the Queen rode in great state in a gown of crimson velvet. When she was entertained by the University of Cambridge she was dressed in black velvet, her hair in a jewelled caul and a hat with feathers. For attending divine service on Christmas Day, 1565, she was apparelled in a purple velvet gown embroidered with silver and many jewels. The custom of presenting New Year's gifts to the Queen furnished her Majesty, who was not at all averse from receiving favours, with many articles for her wardrobe—such as satin petticoats, mantles embroidered with gold and silver, jewelled girdles, jewelled caps, handkerchiefs "garnished with gold," and ornaments of all sorts. As for the gifts presented in return by her Majesty

to her loving subjects, they seem to have consisted chiefly of gilt and silver tankards, very customary gifts for a sovereign to make; but one can well understand that Queen Elizabeth was too fond of costly raiment for her own royal person to part with any that came into her hands. Very handsome New Year's gifts were made by the Scottish King, James IV., to his Queen and her ladies, the Queen, who was very fond of jewellery, receiving from her husband, on one occasion, two rings set with sapphires and two pearl crosses.

The audiences given to foreign ambassadors were always brilliant scenes. On one St. George's Day, when Henry VIII. was celebrating the anniversary of the Institution of the Order of the Garter, he received the Venetian ambassador and his train at Richmond Palace. Henry VIII. changed the costume of Knights of the Garter to suit the fashions of the day. In the reign of Henry VII. the dress was of purple velvet, lined with white silk and sarcenet, and a large hood. A low-crowned, black-velvet hat of the prevailing mode was introduced by Henry VIII., the hood being still worn, but slung over the shoulder. The purple velvet was changed to crimson. In Elizabeth's reign the shape of the hat was altered to one with a higher crown. On the occasion of the

ambassador's visit, Henry seems to have been wearing the hood, but not the hat of the Order, unless the colour varied. The Italian describes how he went through chambers "hung with most beautiful tapestry, figured in gold and silver and in silk." The king he found sitting "under a canopy of cloth of gold embroidered at Florence," which was, says Giustinian, "the most costly thing I ever witnessed." Florence was famous for her gold and silver cloths. The king's dress is described with great minuteness. "He wore a cap of crimson velvet in the French fashion, and the brim was looped up all round with lacets, which had gold enamelled tags. His doublet was in the Swiss fashion, striped alternately with white and crimson satin, and his hose were scarlet, and all slashed from the knee upwards. Very close round his neck he had a gold collar, from which there hung a round cut diamond, the size of the largest walnut I ever saw, and to this was suspended a most beautiful and very large round pearl. His mantle was of purple velvet, lined with white satin, the sleeves being open, and with a train verily more than four Venetian yards in length. This mantle was girt in front like a gown, with a thick gold cord, from which there hung large glands entirely of gold, like those suspended from the cardinals' hats; over this

mantle was a very handsome gold collar with a pendant St. George, entirely of diamonds. On his left shoulder was the Garter, which is a cincture buckled circular wise and bearing in its centre a cross *gules* on a field *argent*, and on his right shoulder was a hood with a border entirely of crimson velvet. Beneath the mantle he had a pouch of cloth of gold, which covered a dagger; and his fingers were one mass of jewelled rings." *

The ambassador does not remark on the enormous puffing of the trunk hose from the thigh nearly to the knee, which was a characteristic of male dress of the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth. Probably, as it was a Continental fashion, it did not strike the admiring Italian as anything peculiar. The Venetians wore large padded hose coming down below the knee, where it was gartered, while the French hose only just reached the knee. In England all sorts of hose were worn. The large hose, which were made of silk and velvet and other expensive materials, cost enormous sums of money.

Padding was the order of the day. Fine gentlemen had their sleeves puffed out till the shape of the arm was quite unrecognizable. The doublet was stuffed not only at the shoulders, as it had been

* Sebastian Giustinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII.*

before, but also in front, where it was brought to a point. Says Philip Stubbes: "Their doublets are so stuffed, bombasted, and sewed, as they can verie hardly eyther stoupe downe, or decline themselves to the grounde, soe styffe and sturdy they stand about them."

xThe most common form of foot-gear was the low shoe with the big Tudor ribbon rose. There was worn also a kind of outdoor shoe which excited the merriment of those who held aloof from the new fashions, because it caused the wearer to shuffle. This was the pantofle, originally a plainer kind of shoe to be slipped on over the other as a protection. But pantofles soon became as dainty as the shoes themselves. They were made of wood covered with coloured velvet or leather ornamented with silk stitching, and they had gold and silver buckles and rosettes. They were a modification of the "chopines," which were worn in Italy at this time, and ladies' high-heeled shoes were frequently called chopines in England. But the Italian chopine was very different from the English chopine. Coryate describes the chopines worn in Italy as being "of a great height, even half a yard high; and by how much the nobler a woman is, by so much the higher are her chopines. All their gentlewomen, and most of their wives and

widows that are of any wealth, are assisted and supported either by men or women when they walk abroad, to the end they may not fall." English ladies never wore any such absurd articles, though the heels to their slippers were unnecessarily high and quite unsuited to pedestrian exercise. More comfortable shoes were also in vogue, and one of the Tudor princesses had black velvet buskins or short boots lined with fur.

To make a leap from foot to neck, we see that while long hair was in fashion for men, the collar was an unpretending affair, nothing more than a band an inch or two deep. Even Henry VIII., who introduced short hair, wore a simple band of this sort, without lace or other ornament; but bands of Italian cut-work cost large sums, mounting up to as much as sixty pounds, say some writers. There were also partelets for the neck, made of velvet or lawn. These were much larger than the bands, being similar in shape and size to the gorgets of which we hear so much in earlier periods. They were made of embroidered lawn, velvet and Venetian work. Queen Mary had a partelet and ruffs of black silk, and Henry VIII. had a partelet of green velvet. That same monarch wore what were called four-quarter jackets or jerkins — a common article of dress, which in winter had the

sleeves lined with fur,—and also loose coats called frocks. There were many fashions in gowns: gowns cut after the Venetian and after the Savoy style, gowns with, and gowns without lining. Anne of Cleves, at her first interview with Henry VIII., wore a Dutch gown which was made with a round skirt and had no train.

A sixteenth-century writer, commenting on the fashions of his day, says, "I think no realme in the worlde, no, not among the Turkes and Sarasyns, dote so much in the vanity of their apparell as the Englyshe men do at thys present. Theyr cote must be made after the Italian fashion, theyr cloke after the use of the Spanyardes, their gowne after the maner of the Turkes, their cappe muste be of the Frenche fashion, and at the laste theyr dagarde muste be Scottish, wythe a Venetian tassel of sylke. I speake nothyng of theyr dublets and hoses, which for the moste parte are so minsed, cutte, and tagged, that shortlye after they become borth torn and ragged. . . . O what a monster and a beaste of manye heades is the Englyshe manne now become. To whom maie he be compared worthely, but to Esoppes crow. For, as the crow decked hys selfe wyth the fethers of all kynde of byrdes to make hys selfe beautifull, even so doeth the vaine Englyshe man, for the fonde apparelyng of hym

selfe, borrow of every nation to set forth hym selfe galaunt in the face of the world. He is an Englishe man, he is also an Italian, a Spaniard, a Turke, a Frencheman, a Scot, a Venecian, and at the laste what not. He is not much unlyke a monster called Chimera, which hath three heades, one like a lyon, another like a gote, the thyrd like a dragon. I passe over the lighte and wanton apparel of women now adaies, partlye because it is so monstrous, and partlye because I have not bene nor yet am veri much acquaynted wyth theim, whereby I myght be the more able to discribe theyr proude pecockes tayles, if not at the full, which were an infinite laboure, yet at the leste somewhat to set it forth as a painter doth yer he do lay on colours. But of this am I certaine, that they observe not in theyr apparell the rule of the holye scriptures." *

Sleeves have shown an assertive tendency in all periods. They have not been content to follow the cut or the colour of the gown, but have struck out a course for themselves; insisting sometimes on being worn when there was no gown to which they could be attached, as when the wide, flapping sleeves were worn by knights in armour, during the fifteenth century. Sometimes they have reversed the shape of the arm by becoming very full between

* T. Becon, *The Jewel of Joye.*

the elbow and the wrist; at other times they have left the arm altogether at the elbow, and floated to the ground. They have been ridiculously wide and painfully narrow.

"My doubtlet ys onlaced byfore
A stomacher of saten and no more;
Rayn yt, snow yt neuer so sore
Methynketh I am to hote.
Than have I suche a shorte goun
Wyth wyde sleves that hang adown
They would make some lad in thys toun
A doublet and a cote." *

Up to the Tudor Period, sleeves succeeded in attracting a good deal of notice by various forms of eccentricity, and the taste for puffing, slashing, and embroidery, so strong in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, keeps them still prominently in view. It is impossible to disregard the great puffed-out bags which conceal the arms of men and women in Tudor times. But they have more direct correspondence with the make, if not with the material, of the rest of the costume at this period than formerly; and as we gaze on the dress of Elizabethan days the exaggeration of the sleeve diminishes in view of the amazing dimensions of every other part of the costume.

* Ed. F. J. Furnivall, *Ballads from Manuscripts.*

CHAPTER III.

Elizabethan dress: the farthingale, stomacher, ruff — Hair-dressing—Face painting—The fan—Perfumed gloves.

"And revel it as bravely as the best,
With silken coats and caps and golden rings,
With ruffs, and cuffs, and farthingales, and things;
With scarfs, and fans, and double change of bravery,
With amber bracelets, beads, and all this knavery."

Taming of the Shrew, iv. 3.

UNTIL the Elizabethan days have fairly begun we cannot fully realize what an entirely new form dress took in the Tudor Period. It was not a mere change of fashion of this or that garment, a lengthening or a shortening of a gown, a larger or smaller head-dress, the substitution of a jacket for a cloak, short boots for high boots, silk stockings for cloth hose. The whole conception of dress changed. A Japanese dancing girl in a West End drawing-room to-day would not present a greater contrast to those about her than a lady of the Court of, say Henry VI., at the Court of Queen Elizabeth. Every previous notion of dress must be put aside.

The nation seems to have become a different people, of another type, with another bearing. Especially is this noticeable in the case of women. There was less suddenness about the changes in men's costume, or, rather, the changes began earlier. The modern form had shown itself in the middle of the fifteenth century, when the doublet became generally adopted. A dividing line which once and for all separated the old from the new was established then, and the changes that followed were developments, not fresh departures. But in regard to women's dress, fashion's wheel took a complete revolution. Before a woman attired herself she had to put on a framework to which her garments were attached. There was no longer any reference to the contour of the body. The whole figure was encased in whalebone. Everything about dress became rigid. Loose folds and falling sleeves were out of date; each part of the costume stood out erect and stiff as wire and bone could make it.

> "Her long slit sleeves, stiffe buske, puffe verdingall,
> Is all that makes her thus angelicall." *

The farthingale, or *vertugale*, the ancestor of our modern crinoline, has a doubtful origin and etymology. Whether it came from the Spanish

* Marston, *Scourge of Villanie.*

verdugo, meaning a rod or a plait; whether it was a corruption of the words *vertu-gardien;* whether it was invented as a freak, or to serve as a concealment, must be left to conjecture. Of all the fashions which France gave us, it was one of the strangest and most unsightly. And yet it held its own for a considerable period, and, after having been, apparently, discarded, reappeared under another name, with variations of shape. It was first seen in France about 1530. As it was worn in England, in the reign of Elizabeth, it was a round petticoat made of canvas or cloth, stiffened with whalebone and covered with taffeta, or some similar material. Later on it was enormously distended at the hips, so that the circumference of the skirt just below the waist was greater than round the bottom. In France its dimensions were so outrageous that in 1563 its width was restricted to an ell (about a yard and a quarter) by order of Henri III. The incongruous effect of these abnormally large hips in the case of short women, and the inconvenience they caused to all wearers and the public generally, can be well imagined.

The upper part of the figure was compressed into a stiff, pointed bodice. Whalebone corsets were first used in the reign of Elizabeth, and the appearance of women's figures shows that they fully

understood the art of tight-lacing. Still English women were not condemned to the steel tortures of Catharine de' Medici, who rejoiced in the possession of a thirteen-inch waist, which she obtained by squeezing her body into a cunningly contrived steel instrument formed of two pieces—a front and a back—laced at the sides. The fashion of dress in Elizabethan days produced long, narrow, flat figures, which looked all the more pinched between the wide hips and standing-out ruffs and sleeves.

The stomacher, which had been worn for some time, became stiffer than ever with embroidery and jewels. There is some similarity of style between the Elizabethan bodice with the stomacher forming the front, and the short jacket bodices of the present century, with a front or vest. Only in the Tudor Period there were never any full fronts, such as we have since worn so often, and the stomacher did not reach the throat, which was fully defended by the ruff. The blouse style went out when whalebone and starch took the field. There was no fulness about the bodice; it was a corset bodice stiffly "boned" all round, and generally laced tightly over the stomacher.

But the great feature of Elizabethan days was the ruff. Here the men have been beforehand, as they commonly were with the fashions, and it was

they who first took to the ruff. French gentlemen began to wear collerettes, or frilled ruffles, about the year 1540.* A sort of ruffle was worn in England at that time, but it was small and soft. Princess Mary, daughter of Henry VII., is represented in a falling ruff, the neck of the gown being open in front. Some ten or fourteen years later the ruff appeared in England. It was a comparatively modest size then, but soon grew to very large proportions, and by the date of Elizabeth's accession, 1558, was an imposing structure. Still, at that time, ruffs had not acquired their full dignity, for the starching process was unknown. And they could not be adopted by any but the wealthy, as they were useless after being worn a few times, and hung limply and sadly about the neck. So, for a while, the ruff was the exclusive possession of gallants and fine ladies. Their width varied greatly: Henri III. of France wore a ruff rather more than a third of a yard deep, and containing fifteen ells of linen, equal to about eighteen or nineteen yards. One quarter of a yard seems to have been a fashionable size in England, and the women—especially the younger ones—took to setting them well back from the neck, so as to show their throats. Queen Elizabeth, with her yellow throat, could not, of

* Quicherat.

course, do this, and she wore her ruff higher and stiffer than any one else in Europe, except the Queen of Navarre.*

In 1564 the ruff had, what might be called, a new birth. Mrs. Dinghen, the wife of Elizabeth's Dutch coachman, brought with her to England the art of starching. She starched the Queen's ruffs to her Majesty's great satisfaction, and set up in business as a clear starcher. All the fine ladies in London sent their crumpled ruffs to Mrs. Dinghen, and a very handsome income she must have made, for she took pupils as well, charging from four to five pounds for imparting the secret. The knowledge spread rapidly, and there was soon no aristocratic monopoly of the lordly ruff, which bristled up more fiercely every day. Ruffs were generally starched white, though for a while the yellow starch was popular, until Mrs. Turner, the poisoner of Sir Thomas Overbury, went to her execution in a yellow ruff. Even after this event, however, yellow ruffs continued to be worn, and in 1620 excited the ire of the then Dean of Westminster, who ordered that no lady or gentleman should come to his church in a yellow ruff. But his resolution gave way when he found Society against him, and he withdrew his prohibition.†

* Mrs. Palliser, *History of Lace.* † *Ibid.*



J. Cook. sculp.

MARY SIDNEY,

Countess of Pembroke, &c.

FROM A VERY RARE PRINT BY SIMON PASS.

London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1853

The ruff was composed of pleats, and after being starched it was "got up" with an iron stick heated in the fire, something like our goffering-iron. In addition to the starch, wires were used to stiffen the ruff. The wires were covered with silk or gold and silver thread, and came round the neck under the ruff as a support, and certainly lightened the weight of the mass of linen. There was a fashion in vogue at one time of working the lawn or cambric of which the ruff was made with silk embroidery or tinsel threads, and it would be interesting to know how those embroidered ruffs stood washing and starching. It seems more likely that they never *were* washed, but were only worn by extravagant people who could afford to throw them away when soiled.

Although Queen Elizabeth liked such big ruffs herself, she objected to her subjects following her example, and issued an edict forbidding the wearing of these articles beyond a certain specified size. The "great ruff" was essentially a French fashion, and was called the French ruff. The courtiers of Henri III. could hardly move their heads when dressed, and found great difficulty in eating and drinking. One royal lady is said to have been obliged to use a spoon with a handle two feet long to eat her soup. Such was the size of the ruffs, says Quicherat, that spoons were made with long

handles, so that ladies could convey the soup to their mouths without soiling themselves. Supported by threads of iron wire, these ruffs had three, four, and even five rows of lace, the last row appearing above the top of the head. Naturally the ruff excited much condemnation from the censors of public morals, who met with the scant attention those persons usually receive. No fashion has ever been preached down in England by moralists, and the ruff held itself erect through all condemnation, never unbending its stiffness or yielding an inch of its width for any censure. Indeed the law, unless upheld by physical force, was powerless against the ruff.

Of course the ruff put an end to flowing hair. Head-dresses were small during this era. Either women felt that they were sufficiently imposing without large erections on their heads, or they shrank from the additional weight. But the hair was not left unadorned. It was elaborately curled, and dressed close to the head. Strings of pearls were entwined among it, and jewelled ornaments and wreaths of gold and silver curiously wrought were worn by the nobility. Towards the close of Elizabeth's reign it became fashionable to wear feathers in the hair. It was very customary to use dye at this period, not to conceal the signs of

age, but simply to vary the colour. Some of the pictures of Mary Queen of Scots depict her with light, and some with quite dark hair. The hair was dyed frequently, according to fancy and the mode of the moment. The most fashionable colour in Elizabeth's reign was golden, perhaps because the Queen's hair was yellow. Elizabeth was proud of her abundant yellow hair, and did not probably care to change the colour with dyes. In her later years she is said to have worn false hair. Catharine Parr, the sixth wife of Henry VIII., had brilliant golden hair; and of the notorious Mrs. Turner, just referred to, it was said she had "locks like golden thread," which ought to have made golden hair unpopular. A great deal of false hair was worn, and it was unsafe for children with good hair to be alone in the streets, as they were liable to be seized and cropped by women who sold long tresses for curls and twists. The style of hair-dressing was so artificial that it was easy to add false hair without fear of detection. Pads do not seem to have been invented, but wires were used to prop out the hair.

This was also a time for cosmetics and face-washes. "The women of Ailgna (England)," says Stubbes, "use to colour their faces with certain oyles, liquors, unguents and waters made to that

end, whereby they think their beauty is greatly decored." These waters were made of "many mixtures, and sundry compounded simples, both farre fetched and deer bought, cunningly couched together and tempered with many goodly condiments and wholesome confections." Perfumes were also much used, "sweete powders, fragrant Pomanders," which must have been a very desirable addition in those days, when there were so many unsavoury scents to encounter both within and without the house. But the severe criticism of Stubbes will admit no virtue or reason even in a nosegay of flowers, and as for made perfumes he declares that they obscure the brain and are "engines of pride, allurements to sinne, and provocations to vice."

Out of doors ladies wore small velvet masks on their faces, and flung tasselled silk scarves carelessly about the neck to protect themselves from the sun and wind. They wore on their heads French hoods and caps of velvet, nothing large or heavy.

A new addition to a lady's costume was the fan suspended from the waist by a gold chain. Fans were not used in England before the days of Elizabeth. Here, again, we were indebted to Catharine de' Medici, who brought Italian fashions into France, whence they travelled to the English Court.

In Italy fans were very generally used by ladies of rank in the sixteenth century. They soon became popular in England, and Queen Elizabeth had a collection of twenty-seven fans, many of them presents from the Earl of Leicester, Sir Francis Drake, the Lord Keeper, and others. They were very costly, with handles of gold, silver, and agate, mounted with emeralds, rubies, and diamonds. The feathers were sometimes pure white, sometimes variously coloured. A fan belonging to the Countess of Bath was made of swansdown and green velvet, ornamented with seed pearls. In France, gentlemen carried fans, the King, Henri III., setting the example; and later on we shall see the same thing in England, but in Elizabethan days fans were the sole property of ladies.

Among the Italian fashions that reached us were perfumed gloves, an Englishman, the Earl of Oxford, bringing some back from his travels. The University of Cambridge, seizing the opportunity with alacrity, procured a pair of perfumed gloves, embroidered with gold, to present to the Queen, who, we may be sure, appreciated a gift so in keeping with her dainty tastes. Elizabeth was proud of her white hands, on which she loved to pile rings, but we do not hear that she slept in gloves as many French ladies did, keeping their

hands covered day and night. Perfumed gloves were, however, known before Elizabeth's time. "A pair of sweete gloves, lined with white vellat, each glove trimmed with eight buttons and eight small aigletts of gold enamelled," appear among the personal effects of that splendour-loving King, Henry VIII., and one of the New Year's gifts to Queen Mary was a pair of perfumed gloves. On ceremonial occasions gloves were habitually worn by sovereigns, and we read of Elizabeth pulling off her glove to give her hand to be kissed by a foreign ambassador who came to present letters.

In England men wore gloves more generally than women—a custom we have reversed in these latter days. Other articles, now of purely feminine attire, were first appropriated by men. Still, in the sixteenth century—particularly in the latter part—gloves were coming into general use. In the household books of noble families gloves are mentioned frequently, varying in price from threepence to three shillings, which latter sum represents something like thirty-six shillings, if not more, of our money now. But gloves were not then matched to a costume; they were a distinct feature of the dress, often beautifully embroidered with silk, the small gauntlets having a great deal of ornamentation. Gloves such as these were not to be lightly

cast aside because they happened not to be a perfect fit—few of them were—or because the colour did not "tone" with the gown or doublet. People were not averse in Tudor times to multiplying their colours. They liked colour, and plenty of it, and many of the materials then used combined two or three tints. There was a boldness in the use of colour which seems rather alarming to moderns, but it suited the rich and elaborate character of the dress of the Period.

CHAPTER IV.

Armour—Imitation of dress of civilians—Henry VIII. and new companies—Yeomen of the Guard—Weapons.

"This to the god of war."—*Titus Andronicus*, iv. 4.

ARMOUR in the time of the Tudors followed the fashions. As nearly as possible the folds, flutings, embroidery of cloth, satin, and velvet were imitated in plate. If a gentleman wore a satin doublet embroidered, a cavalry officer wore a doublet of plate, beautifully engraved. Was the skirt of the doublet of civil attire full, the plated petticoat of the armed knight was in thick folds. Even the sollerets, or plated shoes, were broadened to resemble the "duck-bills," as previously they had been lengthened to resemble the "Crackowes." The helmet had magnificent plumes streaming over the shoulders, far surpassing the feathers that crowned the velvet and silk hats and bonnets. It seemed that the nearer we approached the time when a new system of

warfare would render useless this heavy clothing of plate, the more elaborate and expensive it became. Very complete was the full war panoply: a closely fitting doublet of plate, with a thickly pleated skirt, every inch of which was engraved, even in the flutings; this skirt reached nearly to the knees. The arms and hands, the legs and feet, were encased in plate; the head was protected by a large helmet, from which streamed a great bunch of brightly coloured feathers. The emblazoned surcoat was rarely seen now, the armour itself bearing all sorts of devices.

The horse was gaily caparisoned, scarcely any part of him being uncovered, except the tail and the legs. His face and head were protected by a large plate, having holes for the eyes and mouth, and on the top of his head nodded almost as brave a tuft of feathers as was worn by his master. Sometimes the knight had as many as nine or ten large feathers in his helmet, the stalks fastened together in the middle, and the plumes pointing all ways, two or three sweeping gracefully down the back, some bending over the front of the helmet, others drooping over what, if they were visible, would be the ears. Then, again, we see some sturdy son of Mars with his plumes bristling erect, as if to defy the enemy. This plume-wearing was an expensive

fashion, which, no doubt, was an additional recommendation.

The common soldier did not enjoy this splendour. He was not clad in armour at all, but simply in his doublet and hose of stout cloth, the only distinctly defensive part of his dress being the helmet, which was a cap or hat of plate varying in shape—some being conical, some flat, and some with tolerably wide brims and high crowns. In the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. the soldier's coat is stated by some writers to have been white, with the red cross of St. George embroidered in front. But there was really no uniformity about his dress. In a schedule from the Privy Council to the Earl of Shrewsbury in 1600, respecting a levy in Derbyshire, it was directed that each soldier should be provided with a "canvas doublet, a pair of Venetians of broadcloth, two shirts and bands, one pair of shoes and two pairs of brogues, one pair of kersey stockings, or two pairs of Irish frieze, a hat, a cap, a cassock—very long—of broadcloth, lined throughout, or an Irish mantle." * All sorts of colours were to be seen. There being no regular army, it was impossible there should be a regular uniform. The detachments raised by the various nobles and gentlemen wore whatever

* *Belvoir Castle Calendar.*

colours were assigned to them. Some wore the liveries of their lords, others their own homespun clothes with simply a badge to denote their company, and their armour consisted of nothing more than the helmet, and occasionally a breastplate. Agility and suppleness were the chief requisites—next to a straight aim—of the foot soldier; and even had the plate armour not been so expensive, it would still have been unsuited to the movements of the archers and the rest of the infantry.

Mounted men were not necessarily armed either. We read of red cloaks being ordered on one occasion for some cavalry by Elizabeth, but nothing is said about armour or the colour of the rest of their attire. She also gave instructions that a certain number of soldiers should be clad in motley, green, or russet—it did not evidently matter which; the only important point being to insure their being provided with serviceable clothes of some sort. Henry VIII., when he issued a commission to the Earl of Shrewsbury to collect a military force, ordered the soldiers to be clothed in blue cloth coats "after such fashion as all fotemans cotes be made here in London." What an indignity for a soldier to be compelled to imitate the dress of a footman! But in those days fighting men—even the highest of them—were not ashamed, as we

have seen, to copy civilians. They were not a class apart, looked up to with respect and envy by peaceable men, and they did not enjoy any peculiar social privileges. These blue coats ordered by the King were to be trimmed with red cloth "after such sort as shall please the captain to desire." Exactly: the soldier was dependent mainly on the taste of his captain for his dress. The hose were to be parti-coloured—red and blue, —a survival of Plantagenet times.

The apparel of officers serving in Ireland in the winter of 1559 consisted of broadcloth cassocks—the term for a soldier's coat,—which were trimmed with silk lace, canvas doublets lined with linen, shirts and bands, kersey stockings, leather shoes, and Kentish cloth "trousers." Why trousers—a term which was not used in this period for nether garments—should be mentioned, it is difficult to say. Felt hats were also part of the equipment—not the new-fashioned beaver hats, sometimes called felt, made by the Dutch, but the plain felt hats which had been in use among the commonalty since early times. The common soldiers had cassocks of the Kentish broadcloth, lined with a cotton material, canvas doublets lined with linen, and the rest of their apparel very similar to that of the officers.

The Tudor colours—green and white—never

seem to have been adopted in any military costume. The artillery company, which Henry VIII. instituted for the encouragement of archery in 1537, were allowed to wear any colour except purple and scarlet, certain shades of which seem to have been the monopoly of kings, princes, and the highest nobles. But they were permitted the unrestricted use of silk, velvet, satin, damask, and all furs except the most expensive—such as sable, ermine, and minever. Scarlet was used in naval dress, as in Elizabeth's reign the six principal masters of the royal ships were ordered to wear scarlet.

Henry VIII. was very active in forming new companies for military purposes. He instituted a society for the practice of shooting, and in his reign the archer was provided with two strings to his bow. Henry also formed a cavalry corps, which he called "gentlemen pensioners"—a lugubrious title, suggestive of an almshouse of respectable veterans. But these gentlemen pensioners were a bodyguard of the most select and honourable kind, from among whom officers of high rank might be recruited. He reorganized the attire and equipment of the famous Yeomen of the Guard, raised by Henry VII., arming half of them with halberts and half with bows and arrows. The halberts were much ornamented, and had staves covered with velvet, and

silk tassels at the head where the staff joined. But even among the Yeomen there was diversity of clothing. In the reign of Elizabeth they are described generally as wearing scarlet, with a golden rose on their backs.

Beards being fashionable, the soldier of course followed the mode; only he cut his beard in the shape of some weapon as nearly as he could, a supposed imitation of the Italian stiletto being a favourite form.

Weapons were sometimes inlaid with gold—an Asiatic fashion introduced into Europe by Benvenuto Cellini. Pikes, pistols, halberts, swords, and battle-axes, the latter a peculiarly royal weapon, carried at State funerals, were all in use. The bow and arrow still held their place, and such guns as were employed were not half so much dreaded as a volley of shafts from a line of archers. Gradually heavy swords gave place to light rapiers. The Scotch still carried very large swords, and were fond of the basket-hilts, which gave some protection to the hand.

There were statutes enacted in the reign of Mary, ordering persons of various ranks to keep a certain number of weapons and horses, in accordance with their means, always in readiness. Elizabeth made a far-reaching enactment, by which

persons were appointed to register every male person of the age of sixteen and upwards capable of bearing arms; and to call musters and make a selection of the best men, that they might be trained in all military exercises, both on horseback and on foot.

CHAPTER V.

Leading features of Tudor costume—Silk stockings—Night-gowns or evening dresses—Feather-beds and sheets—Fashions in gowns—Sumptuary laws—Condition of trade—Dress of the commonalty—Knitted stockings—Scotch and Irish dress.

"The fashion wears out more apparel than the man."
Much Ado about Nothing, Act iii. sc. 3.

In the general form of dress during the Tudor Period there was strong similarity in the costume of men and women. The aim in both cases was to produce breadth. Men used padding, women whalebone. Height must have been diminished by the broadening process, especially in the case of women. Trains which add so much to the appearance of tallness were rarely seen, the gowns being cut round and just reaching the ground. The waist was slender, and the shoulders were lost between the stuffed-out sleeve and the enormous ruff. With men, much the same effect was produced about the hips and shoulders; for their



Ketel. pinx.

T. Cook. sculp.

padding and their ruffs were on as large a scale as the women's. But as the men had no skirts there was not the same look of roundness. One rather wonders that when silk stockings were introduced women did not invent a fashion which would offer a chance of displaying those new and delightful acquisitions. They must have been such a pleasant change from the cloth and knitted woollen hosiery, and were so well adapted to show off a pretty ankle. Silk stockings were known in England before Elizabeth's silk-woman knitted that historical pair for her royal mistress in the year 1561, and which so delighted her Majesty that she would never wear cloth hose again. It seems strange that no one had presented Elizabeth with a pair of silk stockings before. Henry VIII. had in his wardrobe six pairs of black silk knitted hose, which are thought by some writers to mean stockings. That they were of foreign manufacture is certain; perhaps they came from Spain, where Sir Thomas Gresham procured a pair of long silk hose for Edward VI.

Silk stockings were not worn in France much earlier than in England. Henri II., who was contemporary with our Queen Mary, is said to have been the first person to wear silk stockings in France. There is some confusion about the term "hose," and it is possible, though not probable, that even

the knitted silk hose of Henry VIII. were not stockings, but the old-fashioned hose.

Two pairs of knitted hose were provided for Princess Mary, sister of Henry VIII., as part of her outfit for the year 1499. This appears a very meagre allowance, or they must have been more lasting than the hose of the present day. At that period hose cost more than shoes, as any reference to wardrobe accounts will show. Shoes at eightpence a pair, and hose at two shillings and eightpence, are to be found in the accounts of that same Princess; and the Marquis of Exeter, in 1525, bought his shoes at fourteen pence and his hose at two shillings and fourpence. The Marquis was simple in his tastes, or else the word hose denotes here only a stocking, such as that in the accounts of the Princess, for hose were most expensive items in a gentleman's dress.

Such was the rage for ornamentation, that the gallants of Elizabeth's day went out riding in hose covered with silk embroidery, in defiance of rain and mud. The lack of a sense of fitness which is shown by such a detail was a prevailing fault at that period.

A peep into the royal wardrobes throws some light on the quality and cost of attire in Tudor times. Margaret Tudor, on her marriage to James

IV. of Scotland, had in her trousseau twelve ells of black satin, at twenty-eight shillings an ell, for a night-gown, with cloth and buckram for lining and stiffening, half an ell of buckram being required for the train, which seems very moderate. The term "night-gown" meant what we should call an evening dress or gown, and was therefore of the best materials. On one occasion Catharine Parr sent Princess Mary a rich night-gown as a present, by the Keeper of the royal robes, who was rewarded with fifteen shillings. At the coronation of Queen Mary the Earl of Oxford, who claimed the office of Great Chamberlain, demanded for his fees, among other things, "the nighte robe with which the queene was clothed the nighte before," which shows that it was a gown of considerable value. A night-gown provided for Anne Boleyn, made of black satin, trimmed with black velvet, and lined, cost between ten and eleven pounds. Men had their night-gowns also. A citizen and pewterer of London, Thomas Ellyot, who died in 1580, bequeathed his "night-gowne, furred with lambe and faced with foynes, to one Bartholomew Kirbye, a parson." A black night-cap appears among the list of a nobleman's garments.

What kings and queens really wore to sleep in is difficult to ascertain, but there is no doubt about

the magnificence of State beds. There were counterpanes of embroidered velvet, hangings of cloth of gold with rich fringes, and the royal arms worked in silk. It is to be hoped that the beds themselves were as soft and easy as the coverings were splendid. We certainly read of down pillows being used for the cradle of the infant Princess Catharine, fourth daughter of Henry VII.; and feather-beds are mentioned, as well as flock mattresses, among the household effects of great families. When Charles V., Emperor of Germany, visited Henry VIII. in 1522, and lodgings were prepared for the large retinue accompanying the Imperial visitor, all the beds, which numbered some hundreds, are described as feather-beds. Sleeping arrangements were by this time much improved, though servants and poor people still went to rest in a somewhat primitive fashion. But Hentzner, who visited England in 1598, observes that all the beds are covered with tapestry, even those of the farmers. Among the more prosperous classes of the commonalty bedsteads were frequently objects of pride and solicitude, and handed down as heir-looms. They were often carved and curiously painted.

The relative value of linen goods, and their employment, are illustrated by noting the way in

which they are thrust on our attention as luxuries. For instance, the Marchioness of Exeter's New Year's gift to Queen Elizabeth, on one occasion, consisted of eighteen ells of fine Holland, at three shillings and tenpence an ell—a gift worth over forty pounds of our money. Linen at such a price was certainly a present fit for a queen. Sheets and tablecloths are enumerated very particularly in the household accounts of kings and nobles. Among the damask and satin ordered for an earl's wardrobe we come suddenly upon such an item as "twenty ells of Holland, at one shilling and sixpence, for a pair of sheets for my lord," and a very large pair they must have been. Six ells of linen cloth to make a pair of sheets for a princess occurs in another household book. Sixty pairs of sheets, four dozen and four "pillow-beres," a quantity of damask and diaper tablecloths and towels were provided for Mary Queen of Scots when she was sent to Tutbury Castle, Staffordshire, and the number of sheets was complained of as being so small. Evidently there was more linen used in proportion for household purposes than for wearing apparel. Ruffs, stomachers, and gentlemen's shirts absorbed large quantities of fine cambric and lawn, and a good deal of coarse linen was used as lining; but wool was more often worn for under-garments,

and no linen was apparently used for night wear. Washing was not very cheap or very easy. There was no soap made in London before 1524, and imported soap was too dear for general use. How the people washed themselves we do not know, but the cleansing of clothes was effected without the aid of soap, and there were ways of cleaning woollen cloth goods — not very pleasant ways — which could not be applied to linen.

The sumptuary laws give a good idea of the materials in use among the wealthy, and which were eagerly sought after by the commonalty. Purple cloth and silk, and black genet fur, were strictly reserved by Henry VIII. for the royal family, and sable for those above the rank of a baron. Even earls might not wear gold tissue. Neither the king nor his nobles were at all disposed to give up any of their sumptuous attire from a sense of patriotism. On the contrary, the cloth of gold and silver, the baudekin, velvet, damask, satin, and other foreign goods used by the wealthy, which were imported in large quantities, as many as four thousand pieces sometimes coming in one ship, were allowed to enter free; the Custom House officers were forbidden to take anything for stamping. But the middle classes were sacrificed to the sovereign's notion of what was due to British manufacturers, and were ordered not

to wear any foreign woollen cloth. The inferior clergy were included in this edict, and forbidden to wear anything made abroad. Damask and satin were prohibited to those who had less than one hundred pounds a year, while yeomen and others with less than forty shillings a year were not to use any gold or silver trimming in their hats, caps, or shirts.

Both Henry VII. and Henry VIII. limited the quantity of material to be used, Henry VII. arranging a nicely graduated scale, beginning with archbishops, dukes, and marquises, who might go to the length of sixteen yards in their gowns, and ending with those below the rank of knights, who might not have more than five yards. Henry VIII. ordained that the long gowns of serving-men should contain not more than three yards, and the short gowns not more than two and a half, and any one daring to wear gowns with more material was to be put into the stocks. It is not related how the King's officers managed to estimate the exact quantity of stuff in a gown already made up. Did they employ experts, tailors who could reckon up a garment at a glance, to assist them; or did they trust to their own untutored eyes? What a number of mistakes and quarrels must have arisen! The law, when it was put in motion, was very summary and severe. On one occasion a man was actually

pilloried at Rochester for the crime of wearing a "ryven" shirt. Wolsey, who was very much given to interfering with the liberty of the subject, seeing a poor man with an old crimson jacket much ornamented, stopped, and himself took the jacket off the man's back.

Henry VIII. had a catholic taste in his own toilette: he borrowed fashions from all countries. Now we see him in double Lombardy mantles of crimson satin; now in Turkey cloaks trimmed with silver; now in Turkey gowns of black velvet, of a new fashion; now in Spanish gowns, long and short. The Spanish gowns and mantles required an immense quantity of material, the mantles taking sixteen and seventeen yards of satin, and an equal quantity for lining of some contrasting colour. The working of gold on damask and velvet was a favourite style of ornamentation, and Henry VIII. decreed that no one below the rank of a baron should be arrayed in velvet with gold work upon it, and that none who were unable to show a yearly income of two hundred marks (£136–£137) should presume to wear velvet at all.

A most stringent law was passed in Queen Mary's reign prohibiting the use of silk on hats, bonnets, girdles, hose, and shoes, to any one not holding a civic office, the penalty for disobedience

being three months' imprisonment, and a fine of ten pounds a day each time the forbidden article was worn. And any servant who broke this regulation was to be dismissed within fourteen days, or his master was liable to a fine of one hundred pounds. Elizabeth fixed the maximum quantity of material in the hose at one yard and three-quarters, and any tailor who put in more was disqualified from pursuing his calling. In the *State Papers* for 1562 is the record of a "bond of Nicholas Revell and eight others, tailors, of St. Martin-le-Grand, not to put more than one and three quarter yards of kersey into any one pair of hosen, and to cut the same so as to lye close to the legges, and not loose or bolstred as in auncyent tyme."

Elizabeth made the citizens of London enforce the sumptuary laws with their own hands, and two members of the Ironmongers' Company and two freemen of the Grocers' Company were stationed at Bishopsgate, from seven in the morning to six in the evening, to challenge every one who attempted to pass into the city with "monstrous ruffes" or very long cloaks or rapiers, and to cut the offending articles to the length allowed by law. The commonalty were enjoined to wear only woollen caps, not velvet ones, to give employment to the woollen manufacturers.

No one under the degree of a baron might wear woollen cloth made out of the realm, and all such persons were forbidden the use of cloth of gold or silver and tinselled satin. Those under the degree of a knight were not to have any silk embroidery on their garments, or any velvet on their gowns and cloaks. Velvet jerkins, hose and doublets, and satin, damask, and taffeta gowns, coats, and cloaks could not be worn by the members of a knight's family even, below the eldest son. Bridles, stirrups, harness and trappings garnished with gold, silver, or velvet, might not be among the accoutrements of those of a lower degree than barons' sons. The same minute regulations applied to women's dress. All the costly materials, such as cloth of gold and silver tissued, the royal purple silk, satins, taffetas striped with gold and silver, velvet and embroidery, were reserved for the aristocracy, and strictly forbidden to all without a title.

There was a very strong feeling among the ruling classes in favour of keeping up the distinctions of rank by outward symbols. It was a sentiment which grew up in Norman times, when a foreign domination created social barriers that had not existed before, and it continued in force all down the Plantagenet, Lancastrian, and Yorkist periods, and was as strong as ever in the times of the

Tudors. The sovereign had, too, a direct interest in keeping the personal expenditure of the people within bounds, and restraining luxury, which necessarily interfered with the capacity of the subject to pay tithes and taxes. Mixed with these motives was an honest desire to legislate for the people's welfare, which found expression in a variety of fussy forms of interference. Everything was regulated, not only dress, but food, hours of work, and rate of wages. Trade was under as strict surveillance as costume, and all sorts of Acts were passed by Parliament with regard to prices. In the reign of Henry VIII. the hatters were made to lower their charges, and sell what were called "best hats" for one shilling and eightpence, and "best caps" at two shillings and eightpence, which before they had sold for three and five shillings. Drapers and tailors were ordered not to demand more than sixteen shillings per yard for the finest broadcloth of scarlet and other in-grain colours, and not more than eleven shillings for plain-coloured and russet cloths, under penalty of paying a fine of forty shillings a yard. Dyers were limited to certain colours, or were liable to forfeit their cloth, but it must be added that they were allowed a wide selection.

Henry VII., to protect the women silk-throwers,

forbade the importation of the smaller silk wares, such as ribands and other trifles, which were all that then constituted our silk manufacture. Protectionists must look back with a sigh of envy to those halcyon days, when a despotic king and a meddlesome Parliament were constantly putting checks upon the foreign trader, and giving an artificial stimulus to the home markets.

Both Henry VII. and Henry VIII. interfered on behalf of apprentices, who, under the rules of the corporations, were required to take an oath not to carry on any trade without their masters' consent. Edward VI. put down "gigge" mills because they facilitated the making of what we should call shoddy, but which, in the quaint language of the sixteenth century, was styled "naughty" and "deceitful" cloth. On the petition of the weavers, who complained of the wealthy clothiers setting up looms in their houses to be worked by journeymen and unskilled persons, Queen Mary's Parliament passed an Act ordering that no one dwelling outside a city should have more than one woollen loom at a time in his house. Certain cities, such as Worcester and Evesham, and others which were centres of manufactures, had already obtained a protective Act which forbade any cloth to be made without the city walls, except for household

purposes. Clothiers were making money fast, and the celebrated Jack of Newbury, who once gave a banquet to Henry VIII. and Queen Catharine, had as many as two hundred looms and one thousand persons employed in his factory.

> "And in a chamber close beside
> Two hundred maidens did abide,
> In petticoats of stammell red,
> And milk-white kerchers on their head,
> Their smock sleeves like to winter snow
> That on the western mountains flow,
> And each sleeve with a silken band
> Was fairly tied at the hand;
> These pretty maids did never lin,
> But in that place all day did spin."

Another instance of the wealth of the clothiers may be found in an order issued in 1560, two years after Elizabeth came to the throne, to repress "the inordinate gain of certain drapers, clothiers, and other artificers that make any kind of apparel." *

The usual dress of the commonalty was composed of kerseys, russet cloth, the coloured cloths of Coventry and Worcester, Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, the broadcloths of Kent and Sussex, the plunkets of the Eastern counties, the friezes of Wales, Lancashire, and Cheshire, and the serges of the west. Apprentices and serving-men wore gowns; the long blue gowns still worn by the boys

* *State Papers: Domestic.*

of Christ's Hospital—which was founded by Edward VI.—being a fair sample of the dress of the period. The yellow stockings were quite a feature of the time as well, and the costume was completed by a flat cap—the "City flat cap"—which was commonly then worn by citizens. Women also wore little flat caps made of white yarn, when the edict was made forbidding those wives whose husbands could not prove themselves to be "gentlemen by descent" from wearing the three-cornered minever caps, which had been very popular. These caps were rather imposing with their high peaks, but they did not satisfy the aspirations of aldermen's wives, who adopted another headgear, shaped like the minever cap, only larger, and made of velvet.

The blue gown, and the blue cloak which was substituted for the gown in summer, belonged especially to the servant class. There were several sorts of gowns, and either a plain, unstuffed, unslashed doublet, or a closely fitting gown, was worn, accompanied by white broadcloth breeches, and stockings to meet them, with short boots or low shoes. Yellow, blue, red, and white were the most usual colours for stockings.

Beaver hats began to be made in England in Elizabeth's reign by the Dutch refugees; but they were considered a luxury only for fine gentlemen,

who used to send for them to Wandsworth—then an obscure little village—where the factory was established.

The wives and daughters of the humbler class of traders, and others who did not rank as gentlewomen, wore simple gowns, well off the ground, rather full in the skirt, and with a short spencer-like bodice, or else a short kirtle and a gown over, opening out at the front. This latter form of dress was, perhaps, that most generally worn by all classes, the difference being that fine ladies wore satin and damask petticoats and gowns and the poorer folk plain woollen stuffs. The quantity of material used does not seem extravagant. In the Countess of Devonshire's *Household Book*, for 1524, is a record of three yards of velvet for a maid's wedding gown, and two yards for a kirtle. Of course "city madams" would disport themselves in farthingale and ruff, in stiff stomachers and puffed sleeves; but these fashions were obviously unsuited to work-a-day life. A serving-wench could not go down on her knees to scrub if she were encased in whalebone, and a gown distended over a farthingale would take much more material than she could afford.

Hand-knitted as well as cloth stockings were commonly worn, for when William Lee invented

his stocking-frame for knitting, Elizabeth refused to grant him a patent as soon as she saw that he only made coarse hose, lest the new invention should injure the poor who made a livelihood by knitting. The first knitted stockings ever made in England are ascribed to the ingenuity of an English apprentice, who, in 1564, saw in the shop of an Italian merchant a pair of knitted worsted stockings from Mantua, and, having borrowed them, made a pair exactly similar. But as knitted stockings were in common use before 1564, it seems probable that they were made in England earlier. Some people claim for Scotland the credit of the invention of knitting, from the circumstance that the French stocking-knitters, who were formed into a guild by the year 1527, chose as their patron St. Fiacre of Scotland; and it is also said that knitted stockings were first brought to France from Scotland.

The great extension of commerce in Elizabeth's reign brought all sorts of clothing materials to England. Not only were we trading actively with European centres of industry, but our ships were sailing to and from the East and West Indies, Asia, and America. Any new luxury which English merchants could procure in exchange for our home-made wares found ready acceptance. "If we could

content ourselves," says Stubbes, "with such kind of attire as our own country doth minister unto us, it were much more tolerable. But we are so surprised in Pride that if it come not from beyond the seas it is not worth a straw. And thus we impoverish ourselves in buying their trifling merchandizes, more pleasant than necessary, and enrich them who rather laugh at us in their sleeves than otherwise to see our great folly in affecting of trifles and departing [parting] with good merchandizes for it. And how little they esteem of silks, velvets, satins, damasks, and such like, we may easily see in that they sell them to us for boots, friezes, rugs, carzies, and the like, which they would never do if they esteemed them as much as we do."

In addition we had hosts of skilled immigrants settling in the country. The weavers whom Alva's persecutions drove from the Netherlands, set up their looms for making bombazines, crapes, camlets, baizes, and other new materials, and, where they did not introduce a novelty, they improved and developed existing manufactures. The Flemings, the Dutch, the Walloons were an incalculable benefit in raising the commercial position of England. It was the Flemings who taught us the best methods of dyeing and finishing cloth. From Norwich, where, in 1570, there were four thousand natives of the Low

Countries, the worsted trade spread rapidly over the Eastern counties. The trade of Antwerp was, in great part, transferred to London. It was from London mercers, who by the middle of the sixteenth century had become regular silk-dealers, that the nobility obtained much of their satin, damask, and velvet—London absorbing more and more of the carrying trade. The *Household Book* of the Marquis of Exeter, for 1525, shows that he procured the satin, damask, velvet, and sarcenet he required for wearing apparel from a London mercer. At the same time the Flemish merchants in London were doing a large business, and when the country was straining every nerve to meet the Armada they subscribed five thousand pounds.* It is to the Dutch that we owe our beautiful Honiton lace, which, under the name of "Dutch work," was manufactured by the lace-makers of Alençon and Valenciennes, who settled in Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and the West of England.

Black mourning cloth always seems to have fetched a good price. When the Earl of Rutland died, in 1587 or 1588, a quantity of mourning was sent from London to Belvoir Castle for the use of the family, the servants, and poor persons in the neighbourhood. In the list of what are called

* Fox Bourne, *The Romance of Trade.*

"blacks" are "five pieces, for the poor, of 108 yards, at six shillings a yard; six pieces of 183½ yards, at eight shillings a yard; one piece of 24 yards, for my lady and the young Earl, at twenty shillings a yard; one piece, for my Lady Bridget, of 8 yards, at twenty-four shillings a yard; nine pieces and one remnant of 299 yards at twelve shillings a yard; one piece and one remnant of 36 yards, at thirteen shillings and fourpence a yard." *

Among the smaller manufactures which arose at this time, pins take an important place in regard to dress. Surely it was a period that greatly needed pins. But the first pins invented were clumsy articles, according to the descriptions given of them. Still they were better than the skewers made of brass—or of gold and silver, for the rich—which women had to put up with before the sixteenth century. Ribbons and laces with tags to them were used for fastening gowns and doublets, which implies that eyelet holes were made. Hooks and eyes of some kind were also known. But pins must have been much wanted to supplement regular fastenings—small pins which would secure the pleat of a ruff without showing. Here France helped us, it is thought, though our own manufactures probably soon sufficed to supply our needs. In 1525 a

* *Belvoir Castle Calendar.*

thousand pins were bought at Exeter for eightpence. In James the First's reign the pin-makers of London received a grant of incorporation, and the importation of pins from the Netherlands aroused much opposition. Fine steel needles were made in England in Elizabeth's reign. They seem to have been a Spanish invention. There was some attempt to make them in Queen Mary's time, but it either proved abortive or the knowledge died with the workers. One would expect to hear that this manufacture revolutionized costume and needlework, but it was not sufficiently developed, perhaps, to effect any change, or else our ancestors, who certainly showed a remarkable talent for turning out beautiful work with very imperfect instruments, preferred their old appliances.

Although Scotch manufactures were, at this time, in a very backward condition, the wealthy classes in Scotland were rather before than behind the English in luxury of apparel. The Scotch Court kept up sumptuous state, and the wardrobes of Scotch sovereigns show as much costly raiment as those of English kings and queens. Gowns of satin and velvet, lined with ermine, one having 49,500 orient pearls on the hood and front, arrayed the royal person of James V.* The marriage

* Rev. Charles Rogers, *Scotland Social and Domestic.*

of Margaret Tudor to James IV. carried English customs across the Border, as the marriage of Mary Stuart to the Dauphin—afterwards Francis II.—introduced French ways; and both influences tended to encourage luxury. The nobles followed the reigning fashions of England and the Continent. It is true that tartans were seen at the Court of James V., but there were few national characteristics to distinguish the dress of a Scotch from an English courtier. As in England, gentlemen had their long gowns and short gowns, their stomachers and doublets, their riding-coats and walking-cloaks, their hose fastened with latchets, sometimes coming to the ankles or covering the feet, sometimes only to the knees, when it was supplemented by a kind of legging or gaiter. Scotch ladies among the nobility followed the fashions of the Court, except in the remoter parts, where the old families, no doubt, clung to ancient ways, and did not vary their costume with every passing mode.

Among the commonalty, however, there was something like a national dress: the plaid was universal, the material varying in fineness with the means of the wearer. Cloaks of coarse thick "ploddan" were always used by the poorer sort, and so general was the custom of wearing the plaid that it even appeared in the pulpit. Ministers had

to be enjoined by a special Act of the Assembly, in 1575, not to wear the national check when performing their sacred offices; while their wives were exhorted to eschew bright colours, such as red, blue, and yellow, and all such things as rings, bracelets, gold and silver or metal buttons, and to wear grave and becoming apparel,* which shows that among the middle classes in Scotland there was the same liking for gay attire as in England.

The Irish appear to have retained their national dress, and not to have been drawn into the whirl of Continental fashions. Ireland, not being an independent nation, was out of the stream of European social life. The country was disordered by dissension and misgovernment, and all the arts of peace had been on the decline for many years. There was a curious combination of sumptuousness and savagery about the dress of the Irish. Some pictures even represent the chieftains at this period with bare legs and feet, though the upper part of the body was clothed in an embroidered doublet, with a curiously full, short skirt, not reaching to the knees, worn over a pleated shirt. The mantle was long, with jagged edges, and the hair was allowed to flow freely over the shoulders. The Irish usually went bareheaded; if they wore anything it was a small

* Rev. Charles Rogers, *Social Life in Scotland.*

flat cap. Their distinguishing characteristic was the "glib," or lock of hair hanging over the forehead. Women bound silk fillets round their heads; and their long tunics, with sleeves to the wrist, and surcoats, with what we should call now, elbow sleeves, were not unlike the mediæval costumes of England and France.

It seems hard that they should not have been left to follow their own tastes, but Henry VIII. was determined to make Ireland appear outwardly in harmony with England, and to suppress everything which marked the difference of race. He swooped down upon the inhabitants of Galway, who seem to have been rebellious in the matter of costume, with an order to wear English doublets, cloaks, gowns, and caps, to cut off their moustaches, and not to let their hair hang over their ears. He also forbade the dyeing of shirts with saffron colour, and the embroidering of kirtles with "Usker;" and he limited the quantity of material to be used in shirts and smocks to seven yards.* There was trouble enough in Ireland without rousing needless irritation by interfering with the people's liberty in small personal matters; but Ireland was only treated with the same paternal tyranny, accentuated, which ruled English social life in the time of the Tudors.

* Planché, *Encyclopædia of Costume.*

CHAPTER VI.

Dress of the clergy—Certain articles of costume forbidden—Ecclesiastical vestments—Change produced by Reformation—Class dress—Liveries—Miscellaneous.

"He that is proud of the rustling of his silks, like a madman, laughs at the rattling of his fetters."—FULLER, *Holy and Profane States.*

THE poorer clergy in the sixteenth century, the simple priests, were like the soldiery as regards dress: they had no distinctive garb for general wear, but enjoyed the same variety of clothing as other men. Here is a list of some of the garments belonging to a country parson in the reign of Henry VIII.: a gown of violet cloth lined with red, a jerkin of tawny camlet, a tippet of sarcenet, two hoods of violet cloth lined with green sarcenet, a black cloth gown furred with lamb—a very secular wardrobe indeed. If a country parson indulged in coloured cloth and sarcenet, we may be sure that the dress of the order in general was not confined to sombre shades. The time had not come for the

black clerical garb to be adopted. A priest was enjoined to refrain from extravagance, and to set an example of moderation in dress; but the very prohibitions put upon the clergy show that their garments had more of a lay than of a sacerdotal character. Embroidered girdles, silk hoods, and daggers were especially mentioned, in a pastoral letter from the Primate, as things not to be worn. The tonsure, which was common to clergy of all grades, and which above all else distinguished them from the laity, was a cause of stumbling to some of the more lax.

At a synod, held in 1487, the clergy were particularly condemned for wearing their hair long. On another occasion they were charged to cut their hair short enough to let the ears be seen. Long flowing beards they might and did wear when beards were in fashion. The clergy followed the fashions like other men, and only minute and peremptory edicts from their superiors or the King prevented them from adopting all the extravagances of the day. The varied every-day dress of the clergy in early times does not seem so strange when it is recollected that the vestments themselves had a secular origin; that "the dress of the clergy had no distinct intention—symbolical, sacerdotal, sacrificial, or mystical; but originated simply

in the fashions common to the whole community of the Roman Empire during the first three centuries."*

What may be called the official dress of the clergy remained much the same, except that it grew more and more splendid, richer in hue, stiffer with embroidery, and more thickly sewn with jewels. Cardinal Wolsey, with his scarlet satin robes and sable tippet, with his silk and gold on saddle and trappings as well as on apparel, was perhaps the most magnificent English priest the Church ever had. Under his rule not one jot of ecclesiastical luxury was abated. The gorgeousness of all appertaining to the Roman form of worship is the more striking in contrast with the simplicity which characterized that which was preparing to take its place. Cranmer, in his close dark cassock and leathern girdle, exemplified in his dress the change of feeling which was rending religious England in twain. The white gowns, the plain white surplices and black scarves of the men of the new faith, must have seemed oddly at variance with all established custom to congregations accustomed to feast their eyes on embroidered stoles and jewelled copes. No change ever came over civil costume with such suddenness as the Reformation brought to ecclesiastical dress. It was as if laymen had put off their

* A. P. Stanley, D.D., *Christian Institutions.*

velvet doublets and ruffs, and had donned the plain black coat and narrow linen collar of the present day. It took us three hundred years to acquire the simplicity which marks the later Victorian era. The Church made the change in one generation. In Elizabeth's time there was frequently to be seen the same "mingle-mangle" of attire among the clergy which our old friend Stubbes describes with so much vividness as prevailing among the laity. Some of the clergy tried to retain the garb of both Churches with ludicrous results, the Roman vestments and the Protestant gowns being mingled together in masquerade fashion.

The sixteenth century was a period when there was a good deal of "class" dress—dress denoting not only rank, but occupation. There were the great trading companies each with their separate liveries, varying from time to time. The city companies figured conspicuously in all State processions, and greatly added to the brilliancy of the spectacle. Then there were the aldermen, who made a brave show. At a review of the muster of the city, held in 1539, the lord mayor and aldermen were all arrayed in white armour with black velvet coats and velvet caps. The body-guard accompanying the aldermen were in white silk, and so were many of the citizens, who had breast-plates

studded with silver. The sword-bearers of London were in white damask. There were the heralds with their tabards, or long loose coats slit up at the sides. There were the servants of the royal household; the retainers of lords, earls, and barons; the attendants of gentlemen, who accompanied their masters through the streets at night with lanterns; the apprentices, whose dress has already been noticed; the minstrels, who were generally attached to some noble house and wore the livery, or at least the badge, of their patrons; not speak of the numerous players and showmen, who played a conspicuous part at fairs.

If dress reflects the temper of the age, the Tudor temper is difficult to define, for it will not be cramped into any narrow formulas. It is many-sided, passionate, eager, resolute in the face of danger, enthusiastic for the national fame, keen for business, hot for pleasure. The two most notable sovereigns, Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, with their capacity for work, their singular talents and many accomplishments, their love of luxury and amusement, sum up in their own personality the characteristics of the time. If in dress there were huge errors of taste, if the artistic sense was beclouded, if the idea of proportion seemed frequently lost, there were compensations. There was richness,

colour, variety, and, at the distance of three centuries, we can look back to our birth-time—for so it was—and marvel more at its magnificence than laugh at its follies.

STUART PERIOD.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

Revolution in costume—Characteristics of James I.—His proclamation against farthingales—Costume and great painters—Reaction from Puritanism.

"And what is become of your old English cloathes,
Your long sleev'd doublet, and your trunk hose?
They are turn'd to French fashions and other gewgaws,
And is not old England grown new?"

Old England turn'd New.

THE Stuart, like the Tudor Period, introduces us to a totally new style of dress. Between the second half of the sixteenth and the second half of the seventeenth centuries the difference is as striking as between any two periods in our history. We exchanged a costume in which the wearer seemed perpetually on guard and ready to ward off all attempts at familiarity, for one which was full of careless grace and denoted indolent ease. We passed from the extreme of stiffness and angularity to the worship of the *negligé*. The contrast is all the more striking because the ugliest forms of the Tudor dress became more grotesque as the period

of its fall drew nearer. The round farthingale of Queen Elizabeth's earlier days had given place towards the close of her reign to the great "wheel" farthingale, enormously wide at the hips, and this was universal during the time of James I., not only in England, but in France, Spain, and other countries. James the First's Queen, Anne of Denmark, is always represented in one of these farthingales: she even went out riding in a huge farthingale. The ruff stood up round the back of the neck, rising behind the head with the rigidity of pasteboard; the bodice was longer and more pointed than ever. Doublets and hose were stuffed and quilted, to an even greater size than previously, under James I., who, it is said, looked with particular favour on this fashion as a defence against assassination. The trunk hose, now developed into breeches, were slashed and embroidered as before, but tapered down to just below the knee, where they were tied with ribbons. The stockings which joined them were of silk for the nobility and gentlefolk, and of worsted for the commonalty. Cloth stockings were going out of fashion. Boots appear to have been generally worn by all classes of society. The Spanish ambassador, Gondemar, said to James, "I shall amaze my countrymen by letting them know at my return that all London



J.W Cook. sc

PRINCE RUPERT.

When young.

FROM THE ORIGINAL PICTURE, BY G. HONTHORST, IN THE COLLECTION

OF THE R^T HON THE EARL OF PEMBROKE, AT WILTON.

London. Richard Bentley & Son. 18^4

is booted, and apparently ready to walk out of town." In all matters of ornamentation there was equal if not greater profuseness than had been seen before, especially in regard to jewellery. It was not enough to wear rings, necklaces, chains, earrings, jewelled swords and spurs; the garments themselves were sewn over with precious stones, until their cost was something fabulous.

James I. had all the love of show and magnificence which marked both Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, and was stamped on the whole of the Tudor Period. But he was neither handsome nor commanding in appearance, and was the last man in the world to set an example of artistic dress, or even to tone down any incongruities. The only sensible thing which James I. did with regard to dress was to issue a proclamation forbidding any one to come in a farthingale to see the Masques at Whitehall, because "this impertinent garment took up all the room at his Court." It seems that on one occasion, when a masque was being played, there was a great rush among the ladies for places, and four or five ladies being wedged in the passage could not move on account of their immense farthingales, and effectually prevented the rest from entering until the performance was half over. Neither this incident nor the King's proclamation, however,

among the nobility and wealthy classes, followed the canons of beauty and grace. There is at least one period in the history of English costume to which we can look back without feeling the necessity of apologizing for the humours of our ancestors,—one period to which we can point with pride as a period beloved of painters in succeeding times—a period when for once Nature had an appropriate setting, and was undisguised by deformities. For centuries we had been subject to endless caprices; our costume reproduced the freaks of all the nations of Europe, and a blind passion for novelty held us enthralled. The wider the intercourse with other countries, the larger the commerce, the greater the wealth, the more were we swayed by foreign fashions, ugly or beautiful, as the case might be; their charm lay in their being new. A shoe was borrowed from one country, a hat from another, a cloak from a third. We clung to nothing with constancy; and those styles that survived the longest are, to our modern eyes, the most unreasonable.

In the seventeenth century fate sent us a mode of dress which had the grace of the antique without its severity, which was rich enough to satisfy the most luxurious taste, and simple enough to afford Nature that scope which she had been so long denied. For a time we revelled in the gift; we

threw aside the deformities that had held us in so tight a grip, and yielded unreservedly to the new impulse for suppleness and freedom of gait. The body was relieved from its imprisonment of whalebone, the limbs were reduced to their true proportions, the contour of the head and neck was no longer hidden by the great ruff, the enormous pads were taken from the arms and shoulders.

Just at that time of transformation great painters were dwelling in England, and they left on their canvases incomparable records of that halcyon period in costume. That Vandyke, Lely, Huysman, and the other artists of that famous epoch should have lived just when they did, no earlier and no later, is a matter for endless congratulation. That the King who caused England to be rent from end to end with civil war should have been both a liberal patron and a skilled appreciator of art, was a splendid piece of good fortune, for which we cannot be too grateful. Over the black shadow of the struggle between King and people flit gleams of light from the palaces of Hampton and Whitehall, where all true artists found ready welcome and warm encouragement. And after the smoke of warfare had rolled away, even amidst the libertinism of the Restoration, Art found its opportunity once more.

One sometimes wonders what would have happened to social life in England if the Puritan movement had not existed; if Charles I. had occupied himself more entirely with art, and been content to leave the liberties of the nation unin-fringed; and if Charles II. had succeeded naturally and peaceably to the throne. Should we, without the reaction from Puritanism, have rebounded into the sensuality which marked the latter part of the seventeenth century? The loose manners and coarse conversation of the Court, and what would be called Society, were reflected on the stage, and women hesitated to show themselves at the theatres. Young noblemen found their pastimes in dog-fights and bear-baiting, in midnight brawls and attacks on unprotected persons in the scarcely lighted streets. The chivalric spirit was dying out.

Among the country gentry, who, in the still bad and dangerous state of the roads, seldom or never visited London, there was the same absence of restraint expressed in other ways, the same freedom of speech and manners. Excess in one direction leads to excess in another. "The apparel oft proclaims the man." Gradually costume lost its elegance and easy grace, and by extravagant accentuation of its best points degenerated into formality and ugliness. Sooner or later a change must have

taken place. Fashion is in its nature a fleeting thing, and impermanence is a law of its being. "It reignes commonly like an epidemicall disease, first infecting the Court, then the city, after the country; from the countess to the chambrière, who rather than shee will want the curled lockes will turne them up with a hot paire of tongs, instead of the irons. The fashion (like an higher orbe) hath a revolution commonly every hundred yeare, when the same comes into request againe; which I saw once in Antwerp handsomely described by an hee and shee foole turning a wheele about, with hats, hose and doublets in the fashion, fastened round about it, which, when they were below, began to mount up againe, as we see them." * When any mode has become generally accepted, a desire springs up to carry some point a little further, to add, enlarge, or modify as the case may be, to suit an individual peculiarity. Nothing is left alone because it is merely beautiful. It may last a little longer, but that is all. What was excellent in the Stuart fashions might have survived in a less riotous period, but the æsthetic sense was undeveloped, and we reverted to our old taste for oddities and incongruities.

* H. Peacham, *Truth of the Times.*

CHAPTER II.

The Court beauty — Elegance of female dress — New style in France—Catharine of Braganza and the farthingale—Beauties of Charles the Second's Court—Profusion of jewellery—Masks—Fans—Gloves.

"A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness."

HERRICK.

BEFORE the seventeenth century we hear little about Court beauties; they did not occupy that distinctive place which they took in the reign of Charles II. To begin with, there were no painters to immortalize them; monumental effigies and brasses are our guides in the Middle Ages. But, what is still worse, the costumes of the earlier periods are distinctly adverse to obtaining an accurate notion of the form and features of the ladies who graced the Courts of the Plantagenets and Tudor sovereigns. If a woman had beautiful hair it was hidden under some enormous head-dress, which also destroyed the contour of the throat and shoulders. If she had a

rounded, supple form, it was pressed into a stiff, narrow bodice ; if she had an easy, graceful carriage, she was compelled to strut in a whalebone cage. Imagine Nell Gwynne or the Duchess of Portsmouth in wimples and horned head-dresses, in huge ruffs and farthingales, and think how their grace would have been deformed. Fortunately, the period that produced those beauties was a period that rejoiced in a glorified simplicity of costume. The style that prevailed during the latter part of the reign of Charles I. and the greater portion of the reign of Charles II., was one that clamoured for the aid of Nature, instead of contemptuously thrusting it on one side, as had been done previously. It was a golden time for damsels with white necks and rounded arms, with well-poised heads and luxuriant hair, the time for youth which can afford to be daring, and for beauty which can laugh at artifice.

The reformation of costume began in France. Spain was still clinging to ruffs and farthingales when the French ladies had discarded them, and it was some time before the change took root in England. Under James I. and Anne of Denmark there was no alteration beyond an aggravation of all the most grotesque points of the Elizabethan costume. The wheel farthingales were larger and the high ruffs, if anything, stiffer than before. Even

during the earlier part of Charles the First's reign costume remained practically unaltered. The ruffs stood further away from the throat and were thinner, looking more like a gauze framework on the shoulders; and the gowns were modified in width. It is surprising that the fashions did not change sooner, considering that we had a young and lovely French Queen who must have shown the new style to exquisite advantage. And surely the artistic taste of Charles I., manifest when he was Prince of Wales, and more developed with years, must have been offended, not to say outraged, by the costumes of his own mother, Anne of Denmark. But Henrietta Maria was only a girl between fifteen and sixteen when she married, and, as a strong Roman Catholic, she was very unpopular. In spite of all her attraction she never won the affections of the English people, or even their sympathy, until she settled in England as Dowager Queen after the Restoration. In less than a year after her marriage the whole French suite were dismissed, and the influence of an unpopular Queen with no following of her own nation counted for little. So for a while the fashions of the Tudor Period held their ground. Then they were suddenly and completely swept away.

The French ladies began by taking off their stiff

ruffs, and putting in place a pretty soft *fichu* of muslin and lace. Then they delivered themselves from the thraldom of whalebone petticoats, and let their gowns fall gracefully to the ground; they took the stiffening out of the sleeves, leaving them full at the upper part. They arranged their hair in numerous small curls, massed over the temples and ears, and drooping in fluffy ringlets over the neck, but drawn away from the forehead, except for what we should now call a light "fringe."

These things we did in England. Catharine of Portugal, when she came to this country as the Queen of Charles II., was arrayed in ruff and farthingale, and was reluctant to alter her dress to the prevailing fashion. Indeed, she very naturally thought that, as Queen, she had a right to dictate what should be worn, and was jealous of her dignity. She is said to have complied so far as to put on a dress of the new mode when she landed, but afterwards resumed her own costume. Catharine, however, was not enough of a beauty to hold her ground, and was soon forced to yield. Ridicule was poured unsparingly upon herself and her maids of honour, and, if these sallies did not penetrate to her ears, unused to the sound of the English tongue, she doubtless felt the want of respectful admiration which she expected to command. Charles had no



LADY MARY TUDOR,

sister of King Edward 6th

fancy for seeing his Queen behind the times, and in a costume which excited mirth, and compelled her to adopt the modes of the English Court. It shows how completely the taste had changed, that Catharine and her attendants should be the laughing-stock of the irreverent courtiers, and their attire regarded as the apotheosis of ugliness by observers generally, like Pepys and Evelyn, when the very farthingales and ruffs which were deemed so hideous had been quite common in the previous reign. Catharine, in the low-necked gown with ample folds and elbow sleeves, and her dark ringlets falling on each side of her face, is a handsome woman, though she cannot vie with the beautiful Duchess of Cleveland, or that most exquisite of Court beauties, Mrs. Nott. But when the Queen arrived in London, she came, says Evelyn, "with a traine of Portuguese ladies in their monstrous fardingals or guard-infantas, their complexions olivader and sufficiently unagreeable. Her Majesty in the same habit, her foretop long and turn'd aside very strangely. She was yet of the handsomest countenance of all the rest, and tho' low of stature pretily shaped, languishing and excellent eyes, her teeth wronging her mouth by sticking a little too far out; for the rest lovely enough." Poor Queen Catharine! what a pity she did not give way at once, instead of making

herself and her attendants targets for sport! The only wonder is that, handicapped so heavily at the outset, she succeeded in gaining as much as she did of the attention and affections of her shallow and fastidious husband.

As we look from one to another of the beauties who made the Court of Charles II. famous all over the world, and caused scandal to abound, it is appalling to think how they would have appeared encased in all the panoply of Tudor dress. Not one of those beauties has a waist, either in the modern sense of the term, or in that of the sixteenth century. Girdles, when worn at all, were cast loosely about the figure, which was defined, but not cramped, by the bodice. Sometimes the gown was all in one, opening over a petticoat, like the long polonaise that used to be worn some years ago; or else it was made with skirt and bodice, like a modern gown, only the skirt was much fuller all round. The bodice is sometimes described as a waistcoat. There were large pleats or plenty of gathers at the sides, which gave a great many folds. Sarcenet and linen petticoats, trimmed with lace, were among the fashionable articles of attire in 1662.

Extravagant prices were paid for costumes for Court festivities in the reign of Charles II. Lady Chaworth, writing to her brother, Lord Roos, on

November 2, 1676, says: "Mighty bravery in clothes preparing for the Queen's birthday, espeicially Mis Phraser, whose gowne is ermine upon velvet, imbroidered with gold and lined with cloth of gold: 'twill come to £300, and frights Sir Carr Scroope, who is much in love with her, from marrying her, saying his estate will scarce maintaine her in clothes." On November 16th of the same year, Lady Chaworth writes: "Mr. Bernard Howard made one of the greatest and most absolute French feasts that ever I saw last Tuesday, att Somerset House, and but eleven of us att it; and the clothes last night at the Queenes birth-night ball was infinite rich, espeicially Mis Phraser, who put downe all for a gowne, black velvet, imbroydered with all sorts of slips inbost worke of gold and silver, and peticote one broad ermine and gold lace all over; yet I doe not aprove the fancy of either, though they say cost £800" (*sic*).*

Most of the gowns had the sleeves very short, and underneath appeared the wide muslin or lace sleeves of the chemisette which formed an edging to the low neck of the gown. The hair is nearly always in long ringlets, knotted into bunches with pearls, and falling carelessly about the sides of the face. There was no set style; each beauty

* *Belvoir Castle Calendar.*

disposed her locks to suit her own fair face: and those who were not favoured with abundant hair freely resorted to artificial supplies. It became fashionable for women as well as men to wear perukes; and not the fine ladies of the Court only, but women of inferior rank preferred the peruke to their own hair. "She has a peruke that's like a pound of hemp made up in shoe-threads," says "Captain Otter" of his wife, in Ben Jonson's play, *The Silent Woman*. Complexions were put on as well as perukes. Evelyn remarks, in 1653, how women were beginning to paint themselves, which he calls "a most pernicious thing, us'd only by prostitutes;" and other references in contemporary writers show that the art of make-up was well understood and practised. Lady Sussex, a great friend of the Verney family, sends Lady Verney some myrrh-water which she recommends as "good for the hede, and to make on loke younge longe;" and the same lady possesses a wonderful receipt for making the hands white.*

Simplicity was studied and assumed, but it was a costly simplicity. If there were no great ruffs to be starched and wired, there was a fall of delicate lace, and the gowns which hung in full folds were as rich as those stretched over

* *Memoirs of the Verney Family.*

a farthingale. A lady's toilette was no less elaborate than before. "A wife," observes one of Ben Jonson's characters, "will want embroiderers, jewellers, tire-women, sempsters, feather-men, perfumers, linners, lace-women, tailors;" and royal ladies had their starchers and brushers.

Some idea of a fashionable lady's wardrobe may be gleaned from a reference to the letters of Bridget Noel to her sister, the Countess of Rutland, in the first year of the reign of James II. "My sister Pen," she writes on December 19th, "has bought a velvet lining for her fine manto, which she makes into a night gown, and she has bought a carlet and silver petcot which cost thirty-five shelens a yard, and fringes round it. Sister Noel has bought a night gown and petcot of a very prity silk of black and gould and carelet; the pris is twenty two and twenty shelens a yard, and it is lined with black velvet. I am told that they wayr petcots of the same as they make the linens of. Coelerd night gowns is mutch worn, for few waers black. I am wondered at for bying a black petcot, for they say black mantos is worn, but colored petcots with the mantos. My Lady Exeter was in a black cloth gown, but it was coot in strips and sett upon black latstring." Bridget, when in London, kept her sister, the Countess, who was at Belvoir Castle, well posted

up in the fashions. On December 29, 1685, she writes: "Mis Botts rett to know which way thay lays the petcots, but as yet I canot give you an account, for I am told the las is not yused, and in ded I have [not] seen any petcots but what has been ermen, and mad up just like your one ermen petcot. Three frenges is very mutch yused, but they are not sett upon the petcot strat, but in waves; it does not luke well, and the fringes that is yused in that fashon is the plane twested fring not very deep. I hear of som that has nine fringes sett in this fashon."

A month later she informs the Countess that "Sister Noel has bought a very fine manto of Mr. Sharod; it cost her three pound a yard; her petcot is of the same, and lined with black saten." Such a minute observer was, naturally, at times censorious. In the summer of 1686 she comments on the "frittful red manto" of her sister, "Lady Gansbourer," who comes in for further censure in another letter. "My sister Noel and I was at Burley yesterday. My Lady Gansbourer met us at Burley, but in sutch a dress as I never saw without disput. Her iengan manto is the worst of the kind, it is purpel and a great dell of green and a letel gould and great flours, ther is some red with the green, and noe lining, which luks most abomenable."*

* *Belvoir Castle Calendar.*

There was a profusion of jewellery worn all through the period, especially diamonds and pearls. The family of James I., who, like a *nouveau riche*, was particularly profuse, amassed quantities of jewellery. At the death of Anne of Denmark it was found that jewels to the value of thirty-six thousand pounds were missing, supposed to have been stolen by the attendants. This shows how well she was supplied with ornaments. The King made nothing of presenting her with a jewel worth a couple of thousand pounds; and before he had been on the throne half a dozen years, he had bought jewellery for his family to the value of upwards of twenty-five thousand pounds, for which he could not pay without borrowing.

King James evidently found a man of congenial tastes in that respect in his son-in-law, Prince Frederic, Count Palatine; for at the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Prince Frederic the jewels worn by the King, Queen, and Prince alone were valued at nine hundred thousand pounds,* and the bridegroom presented his bride with a set of diamonds and other ornaments worth three thousand five hundred pounds. The King gave his daughter a jewel of gold set with twenty-seven diamonds. Princess Elizabeth's brother, Prince Henry, be-

* *State Papers: Domestic Series.*

queathed to his sister a chain set with diamonds, and to the Count Palatine a chain and tablet of diamonds. It was not till later that diamonds were cut into facets, though the principle was already known. But it was Cardinal Mazarin who invented the perfect form of brilliants in 1650, when twelve large diamonds of the French crown were cut into this shape.* Lady Fanshawe, wife of Sir Richard Fanshawe, who held various offices under the Stuarts, speaks of her husband having received a "fasset" diamond ring from Lady Ormond in 1662, which shows that diamonds were not then always cut into facets. She also mentions that, when she went to Spain, Sir Richard Fanshawe being appointed ambassador, the Queen of Spain presented her with a jewel of diamonds costing two thousand pounds. The Duke of Buckingham used to have his clothes trimmed with large diamond buttons and great knots of pearls for a ball. Pearls were often sewn on to gowns in the form of embroidery. Queen Henrietta Maria had magnificent pendant pearls which formed a trimming to her bodice, and on these she raised

* In reference to this subject, Mr. E. J. Watherston states that it was a diamond-polisher of Bruges who invented the "brilliant cut" in 1456, and that the invention known as "double cutting" is to be ascribed to Vincenti Peruzzi, who made the discovery towards the end of the seventeenth century.

213,200 guilders when she fled to Holland, and six rubies she pawned for 40,000 guilders.* Charles II. presented Moll Davies, a celebrated comic actress, with a diamond ring worth seven hundred pounds, in token of his admiration of her dancing; and the notorious beauty, Lady Castlemaine, possessed diamonds to the value of forty thousand pounds.

The little black masks were still worn by ladies out-of-doors to cover the upper part of the face down to the mouth. They were fastened on by a wire on each side, and another going over the top of the head, making a framework. Both hats and hoods were worn, black beaver hats for riding. Hoods were getting to be thought old-fashioned in Charles II.'s time; but the small close hood, tied tightly down with the curls pushing their way out in the front, was a very pretty outdoor head-gear. In summer, ladies carried large green Portuguese fans to shade their faces from the sun, when they walked in the Park, and did not wish to wear their masks. The era of the parasol had not yet arrived.

The Court beauty was not complete without her fan. When she went abroad it was hung at her side. A fan was a regular appendage to the dress,

* The approximate English value of a guilder at the present time is one shilling and eightpence.

and was carried apparently at all times of the year, even in company with the muff which made its appearance in the time of the Stuarts. "Two faire muffes of velvett furred, and one more of wrought velvett" appear in a household inventory for 1610–11; and in 1655 we find Charles II., then in exile, ordering a suit of rich sables and a muff. For whom the muff was intended is not stated. There are pictures of *élégantes* in full dress, with no outdoor attire, carrying large muffs; and when we see them in cape, hood, and muff, the fan is there as well, suspended from the waist. French ladies wore watches at the waist, and striking watches were in use in 1656 among royal ladies. English ladies also wore watches set with jewels. Long gloves meeting the elbow sleeves were worn out-of-doors,—

> "Gloves of fishes and birds' skins perfumed
> With gums of Paradise and Eastern air."

The Spanish ambassador, when he came to offer his congratulations to James I. and Anne of Denmark, after the coronation, presented the ladies of the Court with embroidered Spanish gloves; and when the Duke and Duchess of York visited Oxford in 1682, long-fringed embroidered gloves were among the gifts offered them.

It is curious to find chamois and doeskin gloves,

which are continually seen in the shop windows of to-day marked "suitable for hard or country wear," among the articles of a queen's wardrobe in the Stuart Period. We do not have them scented, however, as they were in the seventeenth century. But the real Court beauty is fortunately not represented with gloves, though she doubtless wore them indoors on ceremonial occasions. The painter could not afford to hide the dimpled arms and tapering hands whose charms are heightened by the filmy lace and muslin of the sleeve.

There was no Court in Europe that could show such a galaxy of beauties as the Court of Charles II., and there was probably no Court more dissolute. Even in the second year of that monarch's reign, Pepys speaks of things at Court as "in a very ill condition, there being so much emulacion, poverty, and the vices of drinking, swearing, and loose amours." And they did not improve as time went on, the latter years of the Restoration being notorious for their dissipation. Catharine of Braganza had many worse things to endure than the ridicule of her ruff and farthingale. She had to bear the daily, hourly rivalry of some of the most beautiful women England has ever seen, in the most bewitching and alluring of costumes.

CHAPTER III.

The Cavalier—Origin of the term—Characteristics of the costume of the Cavalier party—Silk stockings—Garters—Love locks—Deterioration of costume—Beginning of the periwig.

> "Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
> But not express'd in fancy; rich not gaudy:
> For the apparel oft proclaims the man."
>
> *Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 3.

To be chronologically correct, the Cavalier should be mentioned before the Court beauty; for while the ladies were still clinging to the fashions of the past, the gentlemen had already begun to free themselves from the most absurd incongruities of their costume. Beautiful women there were, undoubtedly, but not in their most winning aspect. They were disguised under ruffs and farthingales, and beauty was not openly bought and sold at the Courts of the first two Stuarts as at the Court of the third.

The Cavalier is earlier upon the scene, in all the glory of his slashed silk doublet, his point-lace collar, and broad-brimmed plumed hat. No longer



J. P. Harding del.

T. Cranbrook sc.

GEORGE VILLIERS 1st DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, K.G.

From the Original by C. Janssens, in the Collection of the Earl of Jersey.

London Richard Bentley & Son 1893

is it the aim of a gentleman to appear as broad and burly as padding and stiffening can make him. He studies now to display a slim elegant shape, to assume in his attire an air of *negligé*, to acquire suppleness of gait and posture. Away with the ruff and padding! No more thickly wadded trunk hose! Man is reduced once more to his real shape, though some of the Cavaliers have, it is said, taken to stays, and their figures are not quite so natural as might be supposed. Perhaps the extraordinary favour which the ungainly James I. showed for the ugly features of the costume of the Tudor Period provoked a spirit of opposition, and made Englishmen all the more ready to adopt the other extreme. Fortunately Charles I., with all his faults, was no coward, and never dreamed of turning his costume into a species of defensive armour.

The term Cavalier did not come into use until the beginning of the Civil War, when England was divided into two great camps, Royalist and Republican. The Royalists, or Cavaliers, were as much distinguished from the Republicans, or Roundheads, in costume as in political principle. The dress of the Cavalier was the embodiment of graceful ease and luxury. Everything about it was soft and rich, and there were no hard lines or sharp contrasts. The doublet was of silk, satin, or velvet,

with loose slashed sleeves, and was set off by a wide collar of fine lace, coming high up round the throat and turned over. Later on, instead of the collar was worn a lace cravat, with broad ends hanging in front. The shirts were of the finest linen, trimmed with lace and embroidered, and the sleeves of the doublet were turned back at the wrist to show the shirt-sleeves fastened with sleeve-links. Two shirts were frequently worn, and then the upper one would be of some silky material. "I'll have my shirts of taffeta-sarsnet, soft and light as cobwebs." In an inventory of the Earl of Rutland's wardrobe there is mention of nineteen shirts trimmed with lace, and twenty-one plain shirts.

Instead of the trunk hose, long breeches or short trousers were worn, which were finished off with ribbons and fringe below the knee. Nearly meeting these, came the boots with wide ruffles at the top. These ruffles were sometimes the cause of mishap. "One of the rowels catched hold of the ruffle of my boot," says an unlucky gentleman, "and being Spanish leather, and subject to tear, overthrew me, rends me two pair of silk stockings that I put on, being somewhat of a raw morning, a peach colour and another."* This shows that

* Ben Jonson, *Every Man out of his Humour.*

boot ruffles were made of leather like the boot, but it must have been much finer and softer to admit of being frilled up and fringed out at the edge, as was commonly the case. Indoors, however, the Cavalier wore what was far more becoming, viz. low shoes with rosettes, which showed the smart silk stockings to advantage. "Shoe tyes that go under the name of roses cost from thirty shillings to three, four, and five pounds the paire. Yea, a gallant of the time not long since, payd thirty pound for a paire."

Cloth stockings were still sometimes worn by gentlemen, for Pepys, who was always in the fashion, speaks of wearing half cloth black stockings. There is occasional mention, too, of linen stockings. But those who could not afford silk, wore worsted or thread generally. Winter being the fashionable season, and the time when the aristocracy took up their abode in town, silk stockings were worn by people who affected to belong to Society, however cold the weather might be, the remedy being to wear several pairs at a time. "I'll have a pair of silk against winter, that I go to dwell in the town," says Stephen, in *Every Man in his Humour*, though worsted he considered good enough for the summer dust and country roads. There is a story of a Frenchman who wore

so many pairs of silk stockings in winter that he used to count aloud as he drew them on, lest he should get the numbers uneven, and find himself with nine stockings on the right leg and ten on the left. In the household books of noblemen in the seventeenth century there is mention made of stockings being soled for a trifling cost, but whether this applied to worsted, silk, or cloth stockings does not appear. Stockings were all sorts of colours; the Earl of Rutland had in his wardrobe, in the year 1612, carnation, green, russet, and silver and black stockings.

Then there were the garters, articles of extravagant cost, worn by both men and women, "diamond buckles for garters." Charles I., who travelled much before he came to the throne, though he could not be said to introduce the ornamental garter, as it was worn in the time of the Tudors, gave an impetus to its use by bringing home all sorts of wonderful garters made up of ribbons and laces. Garters for coachmen's and footmen's suits are mentioned specifically in the *Althorp Inventories* for 1610. Pepys speaks of his wife receiving garters for a valentine. Anne of Austria sent the Duke of Buckingham her garter as a love-token. At a fantastic banquet given by Sir John Suckling, silk stockings, gloves, and garters formed the final

course, and were distributed to all the young and pretty women present.* Why women should want expensive garters in those days, when gowns reached to the ground, it is difficult to see. But they did, and sometimes contrived to let them be visible by having long fluttering ends of ribbon and lace.

"Who would have thought a woman so well harnessed,
Or rather well caparisoned indeed,
That wears such petticoats and lace to her smocks,
Broad seaming laces (as I see them hang there),
And garters which are lost if she can't shew them?" †

Out-of-doors the Cavalier wore a short cloak flung over the shoulder. As it was the fashion to carry rapiers, a splendid sash was passed across the right shoulder and tied at the left side, from which hung the weapon. The hair was worn long, arranged in thick masses of curls hanging carelessly about the neck. When Charles II. was on his wanderings, he cut his hair short as a disguise. A long love-lock sometimes streamed over the shoulder. On this picturesque coiffure was worn a large soft beaver hat with a very broad brim, turned up on one side, and trimmed with feathers. It is easy to imagine, even if we had not pictures to help us, that a young gallant in Cavalier

* J. H. Jesse, *Memoirs of the Court of England.*

† Ben Jonson, *The Devil is an Ass.*

costume was a very captivating personage. For ceremonial and festive occasions it was quite common for gentlemen to be clad in the most delicate shades of satin. White satin was much used. Charles I. wore white satin suits, and when he made his public entry into Edinburgh, in 1633, in the ninth year of his reign, he was attended by three hundred Scotch nobles attired in white satin.

Unfortunately, the fashionable world could not leave any mode undisturbed, but was always on the look-out for varieties and changes. "I have wondered," says Peacham, in his *Truth of the Times*, published in 1638, "why the English, above other nations, should so much doat upon new fashions; but more I wonder at our want of wit, that we cannot invent them ourselves, but when one is growne stale runne presently over into France to seeke a new, making that noble and flourishing kingdome the magazine of our fooleries; and for this purpose many of our tailors lye leger there, and ladies post over their gentlemen ushers to accoutre them and themselves, as you see. Hence came your slashed doublets (as if the wearer were to be cut out to be carbonado'd upon the coales) and your halfe shirts, pickadillies (now out of request), your long breeches, narrow towards the knees, like a payre of smith's bellowes; the spangled garters

pendant to the shooe, your perfumed perrukes or periwigs, to shew us that lost haire may bee had again for money; with a thousand such fooleries unknowne to our manly forefathers."

During the Commonwealth, when Cavaliers were hiding their heads and there was no Court, when there were few entertainments and no great festivities, the Puritan party had it all their own way in the matter of dress, as in other things. With the Restoration luxury revived, and costume became more sumptuous than ever; but by degrees certain changes crept in, exaggerations of existing forms which were the beginning of deterioration. A mere touch will spoil the harmony of a good arrangement. At first the changes seemed innocent enough. The doublet was shortened, displaying the fine white shirt more fully, for there was no vest or waistcoat. More ribbons were added, and the slashing was more profuse.

Before long came other fashions. What were called petticoat-breeches were introduced from France. These were very wide and frilled, and formed a kind of skirt to the short doublet, which, however, was not to remain short. The capricious gentleman of the period had no sooner cut his doublet than he wished it long again, and then he decided to have it longer than before, and

to put a row of buttons all down the front. The picturesque doublet was fast being developed into the common-place looking coat. Indeed, Charles II. certainly had what approached to an eighteenth-century coat, and which brought in the waistcoat. That merry monarch actually made an attempt to institute a reform in dress, and to check the extravagance of the age. Unlike other sovereigns who undertook similar enterprises, he began with himself, and selecting a costume which he thought would be neat, appropriate, and economical, he announced his intention of adhering to that form of dress thenceforth. It consisted of a long, close, black cloth vest or waistcoat, a loose Polish coat, and short boots. The courtiers, though they followed the royal example, as in duty bound, laughed, as well they might, when their gay, changeable sovereign gravely declared that he would never alter his costume, especially one so plain as that he had chosen for his experiment, and of course Charles did not carry out his intention. Louis XIV. was partly responsible for the failure, as he selected this costume for his footmen's liveries in order to ridicule Charles.

Ear-rings were worn by men at this time, but not always in pairs. Charles I. wore a single pearl ear-ring at his execution. Perhaps this fashion of

wearing a single ear-ring arose from the custom of decorating one ear with a rose of ribbons fastened apparently round the top of the ear, or else to the hair. There was, too, a perfectly incomprehensible fashion of attaching small black ribbon strings to one ear, so that it was nothing extraordinary to add an ornament to one ear, and to treat an ear-ring as an independent jewel, quite able to stand alone.

The masses of carefully curled, and, it must be added, sometimes powdered hair, which give the Cavalier such a romantic appearance to modern eyes, were the forerunners of the periwig. As Francis I. set the fashion in favour of short hair by reason of an accident, so Louis XIV., since his own hair happened to be beautiful and abundant when young, set the fashion of wearing long hair. But because he could not bear to see his thick glossy locks becoming scanty as he grew older, and was resolved to have the semblance if not the reality of youth, he adopted that famous form of coiffure known as the peruke or the periwig. The French Court immediately took to perukes, and very soon periwigs became fashionable in England. Indeed, Charles II. resembled his brother of France in this matter, for Charles himself had beautiful and plentiful hair when young, which moved the courtiers to the wearing of wigs or perukes in imitation of their

sovereign; and Charles in his later days adopted the peruke, in return, it is said, for the compliment previously paid to himself, and not to cover his deficiencies, like Louis XIV. Other writers say that his hair was getting grey when he took to the periwig. It is also asserted that periwigs were invented by the less sturdy of the Roundheads, who could not bear the sneers of the Cavaliers. In 1669, Lord Antrim is described as having "cut off his hair and got one of the new-fashioned periwigs, which have so much in them that a good one can't cost less than £60." *

The Cavalier was sadly falling off. In a few years he would be unrecognizable. All his attire had been undergoing a gradual change. The spirit of the eighteenth century was upon him. Bit by bit the character of his costume was being transformed; until, in place of the graceful figures which look out upon us from many a canvas of Vandyke, Lely, Huysman, and Kneller, we have the stiff, square-set, artificial gentleman who held his own all through the days of the Georges.

* *Hatton Correspondence.*

CHAPTER IV.

The Puritan: his hatred of ornament—Features of Puritan costume, and attire of Puritan women—Changed attitude of the middle classes.

"Be plain in dress and sober in your diet."—LORD LYTTLETON.

NEVER before in England did we have two distinct types of costume existing side by side as we had in the seventeenth century. For the difference between Royalist and Puritan was not a difference between rich and poor or between noble and simple. Although, broadly speaking, the Puritan Movement was a movement of the middle classes, among the Puritans were families of distinguished lineage. Cromwell himself belonged to a branch of the royal house of Stuart; and there were many others of gentle blood, such as the Russells, the Veres, and the Lisles. The difference in dress was not such a difference as was seen in the Saxon-Norman Period between the governing party and the governed, when there was a conflict of races, or as was seen

in succeeding times between the powerful and the weak. For in the seventeenth century the pendulum of power swung backwards and forwards, inclining now to one side now to the other, sometimes to Royalists, sometimes to the Republicans who enjoyed a long spell of ascendency.

The Puritans did not wear their sombre dress because it was imposed on them, or because their rank and position made luxury unseemly. They wore it from choice. To the strict and thorough-going Puritan all adornment was abhorrent. Beauty was a curse and luxury a crime. The earnest men carried the half-hearted with them. There were many Puritans who, in the matter of dress, would have gone with the times if they had dared, and who liked dainty apparel as well as any courtier. And some notable men in the party showed a laxity and indulgence which their stricter followers reprobated. Cromwell suffered his hair to grow long, though he did not have it curled like the Cavalier; and his daughters are said to have had their tire-women and perfumers, which implies an elaborate and luxurious toilette. Fairfax wore slashed sleeves, lace, and light-coloured garments embroidered and ornamented. But the majority prided themselves on the plainness of their attire, and on the striking contrast their garb presented to that of the Cavaliers.

They turned at first in honest disgust and indignation from the sensuality and extravagance of the Court, of which the dress was, in their eyes, one of the symbols; and as they held aloof from the amusements and frivolities which they conceived were dragging the nation to ruin, so they sought to sharpen the contrast between themselves and the hated libertines by marked dissimilarities of dress. They gloried in this difference; they believed that they were fighting the powers of darkness when they turned their eyes from beholding vanity in the form of satin, laces, and jewels, and they grew to shun all luxuries as hindrances to eternal salvation.

The most noticeable thing about the ordinary, every-day Puritan was his closely cut hair. Nobody else wore short hair. Roundhead he was called, a nickname given by the lively Queen of Charles I., and Roundhead he looked compared with the long-locked Cavalier. In earlier times short hair had been the mark of servitude and long hair the privilege of high rank. This distinction had long been done away with; short hair had even been fashionable up to a recent period. But the change had been very complete, and the Puritan with his cropped head was a singular figure. Long hair he regarded, with some reason, as a luxury; it required much attention, it was a temptation to vanity and to

artificial uses, and it gave an appearance of effeminate luxuriousness. Among the code of laws established by the New England Puritans was one condemning the practice of wearing long hair as a shameful abomination, an impious custom, which could only have been introduced "in sacrilegious contempt of the express command of God."

The Puritan approved almost as little of the soft plumed hat of the Cavalier with its careless grace, and wore on his own head a stiff, high-crowned, plain, broad-brimmed hat of severe and forbidding aspect. His doublet and hose were of coarse dark cloth, his stockings of thick worsted, his cloak of some sombre shade and brought well round his shoulders instead of being flung over one side. There were no bright colours about him, no jewels, laces, or ribbons. He wore round his neck a plain folded band of linen, very broad, called the falling band. It was easy to make these bands ornamental and expensive by adding lace to the edge and having them embroidered with silk and gold and silver thread; but the strict Puritan wore his band as plain as the linen collar of the modern school-boy. No slashings, no gay rosettes or sparkling buckles relieved the monotony of his costume. A description of Puritan dress is, as a writer has remarked of the outside history of New England,

"dry and unpicturesque. There is no rustle of silks, no waving of plumes, no clink of golden spurs."

For the first time in our history there were no sumptuary laws enacted against costume, and for the first time a large and powerful body of the people made laws for themselves, and voluntarily renounced the luxuries which in previous days had been often forbidden without effect. It was always a difficult matter to coerce Englishmen into compliance with social laws, with regulations interfering with their daily habits and domestic lives; but the type of Englishman which arose in the seventeenth century, the Englishman who represented a very large section of the middle class, imposed on himself a code far stricter than the most arbitrary of sovereigns or the fussiest of Parliaments would have dared to frame. Dress was no longer a matter of custom; it had become a matter of conscience.

The Puritan lady somewhat resembled the Quakeress in the character of her attire. Her gown was perfectly plain; there was no embroidery, no fluttering of ribbons and laces, but it was often of good substantial silk. Bridget Ireton, afterwards Mrs. Bendish, granddaughter of Oliver Cromwell, wore for her "highest dress" a plain silk, "but it was usually of the richest sort." The colour was generally Quaker grey. Round the

neck was folded a white cambric or muslin kerchief, so large as to deserve the name of fichu or cape. The sleeves of the gown were long and close—a Puritan lady never thought of showing her arms, and she eschewed all ornaments. Out-of-doors she wore either a plain hood tied under the chin or a broad-brimmed felt hat with a high crown. In one of the comedies of the time a lady thus bemoans her lot under the hands of her Puritan waiting-maid :—

"I am never drest
Without a sermon ; but am forc'd to prove
The lawfulness of curling irons before
She'll crisp me in a morning ; I must shew
Texts for the fashions of my gowns ; she'll ask
Where jewels are commanded, or what lady
I'th' primitive times wore ropes of pearls and rubies.
My toilet's her aversion ; her whole service
Is a mere confutation of my cloathes." *

The usual dress of the Puritan women was pretty much the same as that of the women of the citizen class, whose position and mode of life accorded with plain attire. The citizeness was fascinating in her neatness and simplicity. Indoors, with her apron and plain white kerchief, her cap half concealing and half revealing her hair, her straight simple gown scarcely touching the floor, she looked a model housewife. The one vanity which women

* Jasper Mayne, *The Merchant's Wedding.*

of all degrees seem to have indulged in, if pictures may be trusted, was high-heeled shoes. Even a country-woman, with her short skirt and jacket, and basket on her arm, was perched up on heels which would not disgrace a fashionable boot-maker of to-day. Sometimes she wore the more sensible clog, or what resembled that foot-gear, strapped across the foot, and keeping her well out of the mud. The citizeness of the richer sort wore large rosettes on her shoes, and when she walked she held up her gown over a lace-trimmed petticoat; but those adornments were not for the stricter Puritans. Indeed, women belonging to Puritan families closely connected with political and religious movements had duties and occupations which necessitated the putting away of all useless trifles, had their own inclinations not led them to do so. Travelling along bad roads by night to the meeting-house, frequent removals, hurried journeys to escape danger, visits to relieve the sufferings of the poorer members of the community—a domestic life, in short, of anxiety, hardship, constant disturbances and dangers, was not one that permitted of indulgence or luxury in any form.

The Puritans did not invent a special garb to be adopted by those who belonged to the sect, but, by abstaining from luxuries and ornaments

and all fashions which savoured of pomps and vanities they created a distinctive dress. The closely cut hair and large high-crowned hat marked them out, wherever they went, from the rest of the plainly attired portion of the community, though in other respects their dress was much the same as that of the commonalty.

The bulk of the Puritan party belonged to the great middle class, the class which had been growing more and more into power and influence as trade increased and commerce offered new opportunities for advancement. In the strength of the Puritan Movement we see, for the first time, a spirit of opposition to the mode of life of the idle classes. However much they had been separated before by outward circumstances, there was a sympathy of feeling between them. The men of the middle classes, though when things went badly with them they may have grumbled at the extravagance of the rich, looked on the costly pleasures and enjoyments of the nobles with envy and almost admiration. They did not censure, they only longed to share, and they emulated as far as possible the ways of those above them in the social scale. Now, all that was changed. Luxury was regarded as dangerous to both worldly and spiritual welfare, and in the middle classes there arose a determined

opposition to all the pleasures of the senses. It was too fierce to last, and the reaction, when it came, was violent; but the influence of the Puritan Movement in England has never passed away. We had been through many political revolutions, but we never had before a political and a social revolution of such magnitude occurring simultaneously, as happened in the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER V.

Military dress—Attempts at uniformity—Scarlet the colour of distinction—Change in mode of warfare.

> "Where are your old swords, your bills, and your bows,
> Your bucklers and targets that never fear'd blows?
> They are turn'd to stilettos with other fair shows,
> And is not old England grown new?"
>
> *Old England turn'd New.*

In the seventeenth century, when there was for the first time a regular army, one might expect to find a uniform costume, but military dress was still subject to much variation. Heavy armour was worn by the cavalry up to the middle of the century, when it began to fall into disuse. Charles I. endeavoured to bring about a uniformity in the armour of the royal troops, but was not very successful. Still, the four classes into which the cavalry were divided, though they showed some difference in their equipment with regard to weapons, were very similarly attired. The Lanciers, Harquebusiers, and Carbineers all wore buff coats

with long skirts under their armour. But it really mattered little what the dress was while armour continued to be worn. Heavy armour was confined to what were called the heavy horsemen; and very inconvenient it was, even for them. At the battle of Worcester the King threw off his heavy armour when he made his last desperate rally. The stout, buff leather coat with simply a cuirass was the more common equipment of officers and men of rank. A buff coat, slashed and embroidered with gold and silver, was no mean attire, and the Cavalier arrayed for the fight was as dashing and gay a figure as when strolling with the fine ladies in the Mall or over the green sward in front of some country mansion. Instead of the serviceable helmet, he wore the large and becoming Spanish hat with drooping feathers, putting a small steel cap inside the crown of the hat to save his skull. His long curls floated over his shoulders, and a handsome silk scarf, such as all gentlemen wore, was wound about his waist. His sword and pistols were mounted with gold and silver and jewels. If taken, he was a rich prize and a tempting spoil to a needy captor.

Military costume, as before, followed the prevailing fashions; and at a period when dress had attained, as it were, its meridian of elegance, it was

not to be expected that fighting men would consent to be plainly clad. They imitated the freaks of civil attire as minutely as possible, even to the wearing of wigs, which became larger and larger as the century drew to its close. A curious kind of armour was invented as a defence against assassination. It was made of thick quilted silk of a dull orange colour, and consisted of doublet, breeches, and a bonnet with ear-flaps.

The general colour of the dress of the troops of Charles I., as far as it could be seen under the prevailing buff coat, was scarlet, and this colour was retained by Cromwell. Scarlet was always the colour of distinction, and the dress of the Commander of the Royal Navy was scarlet. Sir John Suckling, who raised a troop for Charles I., attired his men in scarlet coats and breeches, and white doublets. Sir Edmund Verney, "one of the gentlemen of his majesty's most honourable privy chamber in ordinary," was ordered to be in readiness, on one occasion in 1639, to attend the King at York "as a cuirassier in russett armes, with guilded studds or nayles and befittingly horsed, and your servants which shall wayt upon you horst in white armes, after the manner of a hargobusier, in good equipage." The Life Guards and the Dragoon Guards in the time of Charles II. and James II. wore red

coats, cut in the new square fashion with large sleeves, and the skirts turned back with two buttons. They had white cravats and three cornered cocked hats, and wore heavy jack-boots. The common soldiers were at one time in grey, and the drummers had purple coats and grey breeches with badges to distinguish them. Cromwell's guard of halberdiers were dressed in grey coats edged with black velvet. At the coronation of Charles II. the royal horseguards wore buff coats and white armour, which was generally worn for occasions of display.

Numerous regiments were formed by Charles II.: there were the Life Guards, the Footguards, the Royal Scots; the Queen's, or 2nd; the 3rd, or Old Buffs, who were so called from being dressed in buffalo leather; the Scotch Fusiliers; and the Grenadiers, with their ferocious fur caps and yellow and red costume. James II. added several other regiments. The strength of the Army was constantly changing. After the Civil War it had got up to the number of fifty thousand, including the twenty thousand troops in Ireland, but during the Commonwealth it was reduced to thirty thousand. As for the Navy, that also suffered many changes, being raised, disbanded, and raised again. By the beginning of the eighteenth century there were six

companies of marines whose dress was the same as that of the soldiers.

The manner of warfare, which had been changing ever since the Wars of the Roses, had, by the time of the Stuarts, so altered that armour was of little use, being no protection against a shower of bullets. It is true that all sorts of weapons besides pistols and guns were in use—swords, rapiers, lances, pikes, and other arms belonging to the period when close-quarter fighting was the rule rather than the exception. The pikemen in the Parliamentarian army offered a stout resistance to the Royalist cavalry. In the fierce battles of the Civil War there was many a hand-to-hand contest and deed of desperate valour among good swordsmen. There was still a good deal of the old manner of fighting in the battles between Royalists and Republicans, and there was, in spite of the Puritans, much picturesque dress, which was soon to disappear in the smoke of more prosaic, scientific modes of warfare.



Arabella Stuart

Engraved by J.G. Stodart.

From a contemporary miniature (originally in the Harmond Collection) now in possession of Mr. Hogge

London: Richard Bentley & Son: 1893

CHAPTER VI.

Social life under the Stuarts—Manners and habits—Travelling—Dangers of the plagues—Mourning.

"A crown
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights
To him who wears the regal diadem."

Paradise Regained, bk. ii.

It was a great change for England to pass from the rule of the Tudors to the rule of the Stuarts. Not one of the four Stuart kings knew how to govern. They were obstinate when they should have been yielding, vacillating when they should have been firm, careless where vigilance was required, extravagant where spending served no useful purpose. And yet they all possessed intellectual capacity beyond the average, and three of them at least—James I., Charles II., and James II.—had, before coming to the throne, passed through a pretty varied experience, and been forced to learn many a hard, practical lesson which should have given

them more tact and judgment. But misfortune was not of much service to the Stuarts. James I. endured poverty and incurred many perils, and he became a spendthrift and a coward; Charles II. went through every form of adversity that could befall an exiled prince, and became a debauchee; James II., after repeated warnings, lost his throne through his own perversity. Charles I. had gone through no early struggles like the rest of his house, and he was neither a coward, a debauchee, nor a bigot; but his lack of rectitude and straightforwardness caused him to end his career with a tragedy.

Regarded merely from an intellectual point of view, the Stuarts should have been admirable kings. James I. had a good understanding and strong literary taste, though he has been sneered at as a pedant; Charles I. was a man of brilliant parts, accomplished and versatile, widely read for that period, and one of the best amateur artists and antiquaries of his day; Charles II. possessed many of the same tastes and capacities, and encouraged art as far as his wasteful habits permitted; James II. excelled on the battlefield, and Turenne predicted of him, when Duke of York, that he would make one of the greatest captains of the age.* But apart from political convulsions there were two

* A. Strickland, *Lives of the Queens.*

things that prevented England from profiting as she might have done by the brighter qualities of the Stuarts. One was the Puritan Movement, which sternly repressed all æsthetic development, and the other was the licentiousness of the Court and of society. Between these extremes social progress was crushed. Art, which had begun to thrive under Charles I., was checked by the gloomy, cramping spirit of the Commonwealth; and literature and the drama were prostituted to suit the coarse taste of an age of unrestrained sensuality.

Manners were not much improved since the Elizabethan days, when the Queen scattered oaths as she scattered smiles among her courtiers. James I. came from a Court which was notorious for its indecorousness. When his marriage with Anne of Denmark took place, there was so little sense of decency in the Scottish Court that "no female could pass through any part of the King's palace without being grossly affronted by the officers of the household." Although matters were better in England, there could be little dignity about a Court where the King was likened, as James was, by his Queen to a sow, and "was wont to comport himself, according to an apt simile of Sir Walter Scott, 'exceedingly like an old gander, running about and cackling all manner

of nonsense.'" Charles I., being a man of refined tastes and free from vices, introduced a better tone into society; but Charles II. and James II. were profligates of the first order, and encouraged the utmost licence in morals and manners. The standard of breeding as displayed in the pages of contemporary poets shows that the freedom of Court life was reproduced in all ranks of society.

Many of the entertainments of the English under the Stuart dynasty were similar to those of preceding times. Ladies and gentlemen, kings and queens even, loved to take part in masques, to escape in some quaint disguise, and mix with the populace at a crowded fair. Cock-fighting and bull-baiting, which the scholarly John Evelyn describes as "butcherly sports," were very popular; and among noblemen as well as among the populace carouses were the common close to an evening's entertainment. But there were also magnificent balls and banquets, at which every refinement of luxury was displayed, and elaborately contrived ballets, in which young girls and boys were trained to perform with great skill. There was, too, the endless diversion of cards, at which "cursing, swearing, grumbling and rejoicing were heard to an accompanying rattle of guineas." Prodigious sums were staked, and ladies of rank would some-

times lose between two and three thousand guineas in a night. Left to themselves, the ladies of the Court seem to have had a dull time, and wiled away the long hours with childish games. Among men tennis and golf were much played, golf especially in Scotland. When, as Duke of York, James II. spent some months in Scotland, he often used to play golf on the links of Leith.

In what might be described as the upper middle class there were many quiet, cultured persons who delighted in literature and the arts, who collected books and read them, bought and painted pictures, studied music and listened to the best musicians. Architecture had made great progress, and there was a wide-spread taste for decoration. Grinling Gibbons adorned many a mansion and public building with his exquisite sculpture and carving. Horticulture was much practised, and the laying out of gardens was carried to quite a fine art. The houses were improved in regard to furniture, but the tendency among the wealthy was rather towards ornamentation than comfort. They liked splendid porches and mantelpieces, and curious objects procured at great cost, but they put up with uncomfortable stools and high-backed chairs, with draughty windows and ill-fitting doors. One of the staple occupations of the ladies of the household

was to make needlework covers (which they called carpets) for tables, chairs, and the cushions which even that age seems to have found necessary.

A great change in social life was brought about by the more general use of carriages or coaches. The old whirlicote was a bone-breaking vehicle, and altogether too unwieldly for general purposes. The royal carriages, when Charles I. came to the throne, were cumbersome, gaudy vehicles, accommodating eight persons, with leather curtains instead of windows. There was a mysterious means of conveying goods called the "foot-post," and, failing this, horses were laden with panniers. Gentlemen went everywhere on horseback, and ladies who did not wish to ride were carried in horse litters, which continued to be used after coaches were invented. The first English coach was made in 1535, for the Earl of Rutland. Thirty years later a Dutchman, William Booren, brought over a coach from the Netherlands, and presented it to Queen Elizabeth; so the Earl of Arundel, who is credited with introducing coaches into England in 1580, was not the first in the field. Long after this the state of the roads was not such as to make travelling on wheels easy. In the autumn of 1679, when the Duke and Duchess of York were going to Scotland from London, they were only able to travel ten miles a day, owing to the

rains, which made the highways almost impassable. They even chose to return by sea in the depth of winter, rather than undertake the fatigues of the road journey. In Scotland the roads were impracticable for carriages, and a horse-litter was a necessity for those who could not ride.

But by the middle of the seventeenth century persons of distinction in London began to keep their coaches. Evelyn ordered his first coach, in 1652, to be made from a pattern he obtained in Paris. Indeed, in the early part of the century the fashionable world had coaches. Sir John Spencer (who died in 1610), one of the Lord Mayors of London, and one of the richest citizens of the day, was requested by his wife to furnish her with two coaches, one lined with velvet and drawn by four horses for her own special use, and one for her attendants lined with cloth. But even then she was not satisfied. She required extra carriages for travelling "as shall be fitting for all orderly, not pestering my things with my women's, nor theirs with either chambermaids', nor theirs with washmaids'."

The difficulties of travelling encountered even by those who could command every convenience are strikingly exemplified in a letter from Viscountess Campden to her husband. She was staying in London with her brother Charles, and expresses

fears of a bad and dangerous journey down, owing to the waters and the state of the ways. Viscount Campden was then at Exton. "In London," wrote the Viscountess on April 18, 1682, "it is so wet and dirty in the streets that one cannot alight without being 'over shoes,' and it is very sad going into shops." *

It was the aim of gay noblemen to have gorgeous equipages with their arms emblazoned on the back. The Duke of Buckingham drove a coach and six as early as 1619. In the comedy of *The Schemers*, by Jasper Mayne, a seventeenth century writer, "Dorcas" demands not only a footman to run by her when she visits or takes the air in Hyde Park, but a coach, six horses, and a postillion. People of rank evidently had running footmen at this period. Lady Anne Halkett, when she travelled by the post-coach from York to Edinburgh, had a footman who ran beside the coach faster than six horses, so that he was thought by the coachman to be an emissary of Satan.

There were hackney coaches in London in 1625, and sedan chairs were introduced from Italy by Sir Sanders Duncomb. In the reign of Charles II. the stage-coach was started, and must have been a great boon. It carried passengers at the rate

* *Belvoir Castle Calendar.*

of one shilling for five miles. Rather curious is it to find that, just when riding was beginning to be superseded by other modes of conveyance, women began to realize the necessity for having a proper riding-habit. Hitherto they appear to have worn their usual gowns, and even mounted in farthingales when these were in fashion. The new riding-habit consisted of a doublet, a coat with long skirts and a tall hat, a very mannish costume, reflecting great want of ingenuity on the part of *cavalières*, who might surely have devised something equally suitable and more becoming. If this were the dress worn by Maria Beatrice of Modena, Duchess of York, it was not very successful; for the Duchess, who was passionately fond of riding, and presumably had a good seat, being thrown on one occasion, was dragged along the ground for some distance, owing to her long habit becoming entangled in the saddle.

The hackney coach and the private carriage made an immense difference to social life in London, especially among women, for whom walking in bad weather was next to impossible. There were no umbrellas; and not only the sky, but the overhanging roofs and projecting windows in the narrow streets dripped upon the passer-by; while at all times there was the chance of receiving the

contents of a dirty pail thrown from an upper story, the street being the receptacle for all manner of slops and refuse. The low shoes which women commonly wore were ill-adapted for treading the unpaved ways and protecting the feet from damp. Coaches and carriages were needed infinitely more then than now. Outside London, however, in spite of the new conveyances, travelling was still slow and difficult by day and dangerous by night. The suburbs as well as the country roads were infested with highwaymen, and robberies were of everyday occurrence.

In the country, families were much isolated, and dependent on their own resources for amusement. There were morrice dances and mummeries at Christmas, and the great Church festivals were always observed, and offered opportunity for entertainment. Country gentlemen were generally very hospitable, but there was not much social intercourse except on special occasions, such as a marriage or a majority. This lack of intercommunication had a great influence on costume. Country ladies could not, if they would, change their fashions very quickly. They were obliged to exercise great care and forethought in selecting materials when they got the chance, and often had to wait for a trimming until one of the male members of the family was going to ride to London

on business, when he would be charged with commissions to match ribbons and look out for bargains in brocades and laces. No wonder that wearing apparel was treated seriously, and bequeathed, like other effects, to relatives and friends. Even the "second-best" gowns and cloaks were thought worthy of bequest, and were assigned with great minuteness to the different members of the family.

The awful visitations of plague had, of course, a dispiriting effect on social life. Before the great plague of 1664–5 there were serious outbreaks, and the one which occurred in 1603 caused James I. to issue a proclamation ordering the nobles to retrench their retinues. Some were afraid to buy new clothes for fear of infection, and went about in their old garments till they excited remark. A rare tract, entitled *The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinarie*, throws light on this period of panic. "What may he be that stalks by us now in a ruinous suit of apparell with his page out at elbows?" says Signor Ginglespurr to his companion; who answers, "'Tis a limbe of the fashion, and as commendable, to goe ragged after a plague as to have an Antient full of holes and tatters after a battaile; and I have seene five hundred of the same rancke in apparell, for most of your choyce and curious gallants came up in cloathes because they thought

it dangerous to deale with sattin this plague time." Even if the gallants had not feared the infection they would still have been at a loss for new garments, because "there hath bene a great dearth of taylors, the propertie of whose deaths were wonderfull, for they were tooke from hell to heaven. All these were motives sufficient to perswade gentlemen, as they loved their lives, to come up in their old sutes, and be very respective and carefull how they make themselves new ones; and to venture uppon a Burchen-lane hose and doublet were even to shunne the villanous jawes of Charibdis and fall into the large swallow of Scylla." Indeed, it was affirmed that there was "as much perill between the wings and the skirts of one of their doublets as in all the liberties of London."

Another danger to be feared was the wearing of periwigs. There was a great demand for false hair, people cutting off their own to make room for a wig; and it was thought extremely probable that some of the wigs sold might be made from the hair cut from the heads of those who had died in such appalling numbers from the plague. This very reasonable alarm did not, however, put an end to the fashion of wig-wearing, which increased, on the contrary, as time went on.

In the seventeenth century there was still a good

deal of ostentation about mourning. The weight of the mourning robes worn at royal funerals was considerable; and when there were walking processions, as at the funeral of James the First's Queen, the yards and yards of heavy cloth which the ladies of the household were compelled to wear in their mantles and gowns must have been extremely burdensome. Those of the highest rank suffered most, as the quantity of stuff increased with the social status of the wearer. In France even children were made to wear trailing veils and mantles. Children's dress at all times was a mere imitation of the dress of adults, in England as well as in France; and very quaint little figures they looked in the garb of their elders.

The custom of giving mourning rings was very much in vogue. Evelyn, who, of course, had a large circle of acquaintance, tells us that at the death of his daughter Mary sixty rings were distributed to friends. Lady Anne Drury of Hardwicke, in her will, dated 1622, leaves rings to all her sisters-in-law, and ten pounds each to all her brothers and brothers-in-law to buy rings, while she directs twenty pounds to be laid out in rings of the value of ten shillings each for friends. Sir Edmund Verney, in his will, dated 1639, leaves forty pounds to his daughter-in-law for a ring; and Lady Verney

ordered rings with "posies" on the death of the Countess Dowager of Devonshire, in 1640.

Mourning ribbons figure in the *Household Book* of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, in the years 1663 and 1664. More than once occurs the item: "3 ells of mourning ribbon for his Lordship, £1 4*s.*;" which, translated into English money of that period, was something under two shillings.* Ribbon played a more important part in costume then. He also has three ells of stuff for a mourning tippet, and three half-quarters of broad lace, presumably for trimming, though it seems out of place on a mourning garment, costing £3 12*s.* per ell, or about six shillings of English money. Then there is mourning for his servants—three ells of crape for the coachman and footman. He also buys a pair of mourning shoes for £2 18*s.* (a little under five shillings). Cloth for mourning suits for legatees and members of the household occurs in wills of English gentlemen of this period. There was a doleful custom which we shared with Continental nations of putting the bedroom into black when a woman lost her husband, and a bed furnished with black hangings was one of the stock possessions of good families.

* It will be remembered that, in the seventeenth century, Scotch money differed greatly from English money.

CHAPTER VII.

Trade and commerce—Lace and its uses—Jealousy of foreigners —Scotch and Irish trade and dress.

"Our English dames are much given to the wearing of costly laces."—BACON.

THERE were two things that contributed to the extension of trade in the seventeenth century: one was the persecution of the Huguenots, under Louis XIV., which caused hundreds of skilled workmen to settle in England; and the other was the establishment of English Colonies in America and the West Indies. It might be supposed that, instead of progressing, we should have gone backwards during the Stuart dynasty, so disastrous was that period to peaceful, steady progress. The Government of the country was tossed from one hand to another; the treasury was constantly being exhausted by the extravagance of the sovereign; the times were very unquiet with political and religious strife and persecution, and there were

long seasons of decimating plague which paralyzed the commerce of the capital. Yet, in spite of these hindrances, considerable advance was made. The commercial spirit was too strong to be checked, and the foundations laid were too secure to be shaken.

The foreign commerce of England was now in the hands of great trading companies, as before it had been in the hands of guilds. Of these companies the East India Company was the most important. It traded with Persia, India, and Arabia, bringing back from those countries jewels, silks, spices, perfumes, and a variety of other products to fill the shops of London traders. The India houses where Eastern silks and chintzes were sold became fashionable lounges. Ladies resorted thither in parties to sip cups of that new beverage—tea, and discuss the latest Court gossip while they turned over the delicate fabrics woven in some far-off Eastern loom. We even hear that raffling went on at these establishments, which was not at all unlikely in an age so devoted to games of chance. But not content with the India houses, the ladies also went to Blackwall and boarded the vessels which had just arrived laden with precious freight, and many a purchase was made on the planks of a gallant merchant ship, the rough sailors looking

on curiously while a bevy of dainty dames, holding up their gowns over their brocaded petticoats and showing their small high-heeled shoes with great rosettes, tripped across the deck, and eagerly clustered round the great bales of Smyrna cottons and Persian silks, and sniffed at the boxes of Arabian perfumes.

The ships which came from the New England colonies were laden mostly with tobacco. In Virginia, tobacco was used as a medium of exchange instead of money, and both James I., who hated smoking and did his best to discourage it, and Charles I. tried to persuade the colonists to turn their attention to the breeding of the silkworm instead of the cultivation of the tobacco plant. "Send home some better fruit than tobacco and smoke," wrote Charles to the companies of knights, gentlemen, and merchants to whom Virginia had been assigned.

The seventeenth century was a great period for lace. In earlier times, when there was very little cambric and fine linen used, lace was not much wanted. But as it became customary to wear something white about the neck, whether a ruff, a collar, or a band, and to make the shirt an ornamental piece of clothing, there was a great demand for lace. Plenty of lace was to be had by those who could pay for it.

Point lace was very dear in the seventeenth century, as appears from the letters of Bridget Noel to her sister the Countess of Rutland. In April, 1682, we hear that there is a new-fashioned point come up, which cannot be bought under fifty shillings, which is considered very costly. This sum is queried in the letter by the editor, and is probably a mistake for some larger amount. It is not stated whether the "point" was a "head" or a set for a gown. In 1685, December 19th, Bridget writes: "I have bought a sett for my hed and slevs and rufels which cost me five pound, but it is not of the fine sort that is worn with gouns, for there is noe suts made of the sort for the hed, it being so very deare." *

Flanders was producing quantities of beautiful lace, which came over here with the fine linen called Holland, used for shirts, bands, and cuffs. Italy sent us her exquisite cut-work, and the religious persecutions in France brought the clever lace-makers of Burgundy to settle in Buckingham, and London, and its neighbourhood. The lace-industry had already been started in the west of England by the Huguenots, who fled here in the sixteenth century, so that a good deal of lace was being made in this country. English bone-lace was

* *Belvoir Castle Calendar.*

much esteemed, especially by the French, who, deprived by an edict of the imperious Richelieu of Milan passementerie, consoled themselves with wearing quantities of costly lace. The importation of foreign bone-lace and cut-work was prohibited during the reign of Charles I., and the proclamation was renewed by Charles II. But that easy-going monarch had no mind to be bound by such a trifle as that himself, and ordered fine Flanders lace, at eighteen shillings a yard, for the adornment of his royal person.* Of course the courtiers and nobles did the same, and the smugglers made a fine profit out of this short-sighted attempt to protect the home industry. Charles the Second's laceman must have amassed a considerable fortune, for he made his master pay nearly £150 for three Venice point collars, and charged him twenty-four shillings a yard for narrow point lace.

In the seventeenth century, owing to the confusion of terms, it is not easy to get a clear notion of night attire. What are vaguely called "night smocks" were made of linen, like shirts. Rich people had them adorned with costly cut-work. As many as six hundred yards of lace were ordered for the ruffs of some "night clothes" made for Charles I. In this instance "night clothes" probably

* Mrs. Palliser, *History of Lace.*

meant the garments worn at night—sleeping suits. A lady, says Evelyn, in his *Mundus Muliebris*, will want twelve night smocks—

> "All Flanders lac'd,
> Or else she'll think herself disgrac'd;
> The same her night gown must adorn,
> With two point wastcoats for the morn."

Linen night-caps were also worn, trimmed so extensively that they looked as if they were made of lace. Some people still wore coloured night-caps, like Archbishop Sharp of St. Andrews, who paid between four and five shillings for a "green-tuiled night-cap." Babies of high degree had their bibs edged with lace, and night-caps composed of cut-work; in a layette for a royal infant hundreds of pounds would be spent on fine cambric and lace.

The use of fine lace was not confined to the gay world. Puritan ladies did not disdain to turn this luxury to account, contriving a method whereby they could at once satisfy their consciences and gratify their taste. With great ingenuity they represented sacred subjects on their garments by means of lace and embroidery, and wore what satirists styled "religious petticoats" and "holy embroidery" on their smocks.

A ghastly hindrance to trade in the seventeenth century were the plagues. The desolation caused

by the Great Plague of 1665 was unparalleled in history. Great thoroughfares were deserted, houses and shops shut, business was at a standstill. Grass began to grow in what had been the busiest streets of London. And the lesser plague of 1604 was very disastrous to the trading community. "I could tell you now," says a writer of that period, "the miserable state and pittifull case of many tradesmen whose wares lay dead on their hands by the burying of their servants, and how those that were held especially very dangerous and perilous trades that had any woolen about them, for the infection being for the most part a Londoner, loved to be lapt warme, and therefore was saide to skip with woolen cloathes, and lie smothring in a shag-hayrde rugge, or an old-fashionede coverlid: to confirme which I have hard of some this last sommer that would not venture into an upholster's shoppe amongst dangerous rugges and featherbed tikes, no, altho' they had bene sure to have bene made aldermen when they came out againe: such was their infectious conceyte of a harmlesse necessary coverlid, and would stop their foolish noses, when they past thro' Watling-street by a ranke of woolen drapers."

Our great rivals in commerce were the Dutch, as they were our chief incentives to commercial

ambition. To outdo the Dutch, English merchants would risk almost anything. The Navigation Act of 1651 was aimed at the Dutch carrying trade, it being enacted that no goods should be exported except in English ships, or imported except in ships of the nations whence the goods came. The Dutch had long been masters of the arts of weaving and finishing cloth and manufacturing linen ; their home industries were in a flourishing condition, and they were now aiming at supremacy in another direction, and at becoming the middlemen at all foreign markets.

Not only was there a strong feeling of jealousy of the Dutch abroad, but also of the growing strength of the French navy, and of the skill of the French refugees in England. The woollen and linen workers and the silk manufacturers, who were few in number, rose in opposition to the foreigners who were absorbing so much of the business in London and the manufacturing districts. Riots broke out in 1675 ; the houses of the French weavers in London were pulled down and their looms burnt ; those workers who had no engines to their looms violently assaulted those who had, breaking into their houses and destroying the looms, on the plea that the engines did the work so much faster that fewer men were required, and

thousands of weavers were out of work in consequence. But these disturbances did not discourage the French immigrants. Ten years later they came in greater numbers than ever, and by 1694 there were a thousand French looms at work in Canterbury. We owe much to both French and Dutch workers, whose skill and industry advanced our manufactures with great rapidity. Goods were made better and cheaper, and fine woollen cloths were, with the help of the Walloons, woven and dyed at a reduction of four per cent. on previous cost.

Englishmen were jealous, too, of the neighbours whom they should have helped, men of their own race —the Scotch and Irish. There were enactments against the exportation of English wool to Scotland. The Scotch who brought their linen to sell in England were treated like malefactors, and whipped through the streets. This occurred just before the accession of James II., who, as Duke of York, had done a good deal to help the Scotch trade. He was more popular in Scotland than in England, and took a great interest in Scottish manufactures, which were still very backward, though his anxiety to please France led him to repeal the prohibition against the importation of linen, which was a great disappointment to the hopes of the Scottish linen-manufacturers. Some strange measures were resorted to

in order to promote the native linen trade. It was enacted that the dead should not be buried in anything but linen made in Scotland, costing not more than one shilling and eightpence per ell, and a heavy penalty was imposed for disobedience. This Act was in force from 1686 to 1707, when, curiously enough, a contrary edict was promulgated, ordering nothing but wool to be used for burial clothes. In 1694 a company, half English and half Scotch, was started in Leith for making linen, and the next year we find Scotch linen being carried to Bristol in exchange for English goods. Thenceforth, the linen manufacture may be said to have been thoroughly established.

Scotch woollen goods could not compete at all with those of other countries. In early periods all articles of clothing were produced at home, but as the people came more into contact with other nations, the coarse, home-made goods were discarded by those who could afford to pay for the finer cloths of foreign manufacture, with the exception of some sturdy patriots who insisted on keeping to the products of their native country. The nobles about the Court were, of course, always dressed in imported goods. James VI. when he came to England did not forget his Scotch subjects, and sent over for skilled workmen from the Low

Countries to come and teach the Scotch how to improve their textiles. Charles I. tried to persuade some of the burghs to set up factories. During the Commonwealth a commission sat to take measures for the encouragement of native industries, and woollen factories were established in Glasgow and the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. Under Charles II. the weavers of Glasgow received a charter of incorporation, and under James II. an Act was passed ordering all the woollen cloth required for the army to be made at home. But the woollen industry was in a struggling state throughout the seventeenth century. Nor was the silk manufacture any better. There had been a silk factory established in Perth as early as 1581, but nothing further was attempted till 1697, when a couple of merchants set up a silk business. There was little to encourage silk manufacturers in Scotland, the majority of the nation being too poor to indulge in silk attire, and the foreign silks hopelessly beyond rivalry.

The Irish were treated more harshly than the Scotch as regarded freedom of trade. England was extremely jealous of her wool trade being interfered with, and put a check on the export of Irish wool, also forbidding Irish sheep to be imported to England. All sorts of vexatious enactments were made to hinder the Irish manufacturers,

and the English settlers in Ireland were much injured thereby. A compact was entered into between the two countries, by which it was agreed that Ireland should manufacture linen and England cloth, but this only led to contraband trading, and the English did not keep to their part of the bargain. Several Anglo-Irish manufacturers left Ireland and settled in France. This stupid policy of interference continued till the end of the century, growing stronger with the Protestant ascendency in England, for the chief centres of the woollen industry were in the Roman Catholic districts of Ireland.

The Government tried hard to prevent the exportation of wool, and also to hinder the importation of silk. But the law was constantly broken, sometimes with the connivance of the persons appointed to watch the movements of suspected smugglers. The *State Papers* contain numerous memoranda showing how orders were contravened, and that in places like Romney Marsh, where smuggling was continually going on, dragoons were quartered to enforce the laws against illicit trading. In 1699 some English merchants petitioned that wool from Smyrna and Cyprus might be admitted free of duty, but their prayer was refused. The wool merchants were not the only traders who had

a grievance. In 1697 the Royal Lustring Company had to remind the Lords of the Treasury that they had failed to pay over the £2,400 per annum which they had agreed to allow the Company in compensation for the losses incurred by the action, or rather non-action, of the Duke of Savoy, who, with the fear of France in his heart, delayed the signing of all commercial treaties. The result was, that no business could be carried on with Turin, and the goods taken over had to be brought back, to the infinite distress and injury of the Spitalfields workers.

The linen trade meantime progressed as much as it could, considering the poverty and disturbed state of the country. An impetus was given to it by the Scotch colonists in Ulster, and, later on, at the close of the century, by the refugees from France, who introduced new and improved methods of manufacture. As in Scotland, artificial means were resorted to for the encouragement of the linen trade, an order being made that the scarfs and hat-bands worn at funerals should be made of linen.

By the reign of James I. Irish dress had begun to acquire more uniformity with English dress. The efforts made by Henry VIII. to sweep away all national characteristics in costume had met with only partial success; but the circuits made by

the judges all over the country were more effectual in bringing the Irish within the pale of English custom. Wherever the judges went the Irish were ordered to appear in English attire with their "glibs" cut off, and their flowing mantles turned into cloaks of the approved fashion. This was supposed to tend to the preservation of order, though it seems more likely that the discontent naturally awakened by interference with national customs would lead to disturbances which were always easily aroused.

Charles I., in this instance, showed more judgment and tact than his predecessors, and repealed several of the prohibitory statutes relating to dress. He saw no reason why the Irish should not be allowed to wear beards and moustaches of any shape they liked, and gave them free permission to continue their national costume. An officious governor in Galway, in spite of the King's order, tried to enforce the vexatious statute of Henry VIII. forbidding the use of the Irish mantle. But in most districts the tendency was to follow English fashions—certainly among the more prosperous,—and to imitate English extravagance only too closely. Grievous complaints were heard that tradesmen's wives and daughters in Ireland indulged in silk petticoats, hoods and scarfs, to the

impoverishment of their families. The ancient dress of women of the better sort was composed of camlet and frieze—a camlet petticoat, a frieze jacket, worsted hose, and black leather shoes. The hair was combed up high, and surmounted by a round cap with a kerchief on the top. This costume was retained among the peasantry long after it was discarded by the upper classes, who tried to model their dress on that of the English and Continental nations.

The Scotch were also interfered with in the matter of costume. Gold and silver lace and embroidery were prohibited under Charles II., who was every now and then seized with unaccountable freaks in favour of simplicity and economy in dress. Only the highest nobles could indulge in such finery as was worn in England, and the gentry, as they might be called, were very plainly attired in sober stuffs. The coarse woollen plaids of the native looms served for the commonalty, whose dress differed chiefly from that of the English in the matter of head-gear, the Scotch bonnet being more generally worn than the hat. The ancient Highland dress was forbidden, according to Chamberlayne ; but as this dress was never worn except by a section of the people, the restriction was of less consequence. As for the origin of this dress, it is

far to seek, and there is much uncertainty as to the precise period when it assumed the picturesque form with which we are now acquainted. There is a kinship between the Scotch tartan and the checks worn by the Irish in ancient times: the ground-work of the old Scotch tartan was red and green, but five other colours were gradually introduced, viz. blue, black, white, yellow, and purple, so reaching the magical number seven, which, in Druidical times in Britain, was permitted only to be used by high priests and kings. The Irish had, as we have seen, a peculiar reverence for colour, and the number of colours in a garment denoted the rank of the wearer. Possibly the colours in the Scotch tartan had once a similar significance.

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